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**REVIEW**

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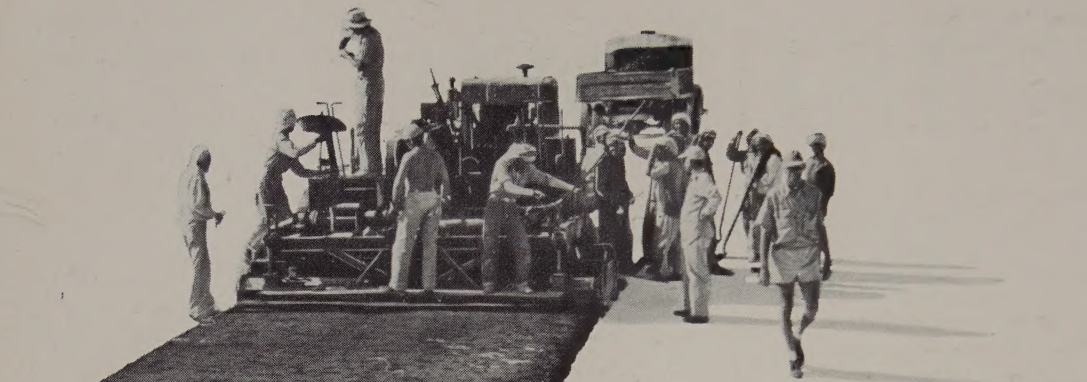
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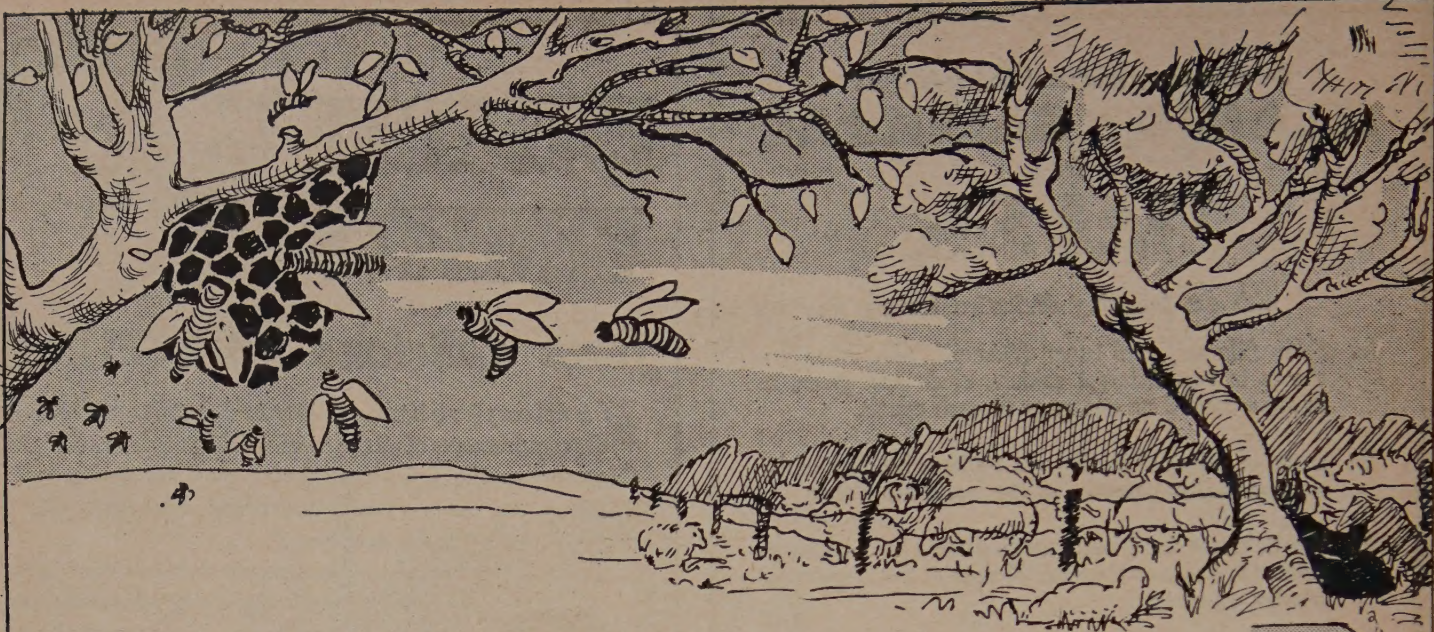
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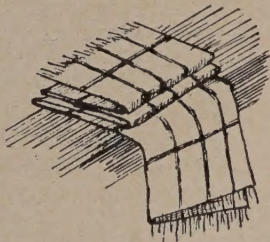
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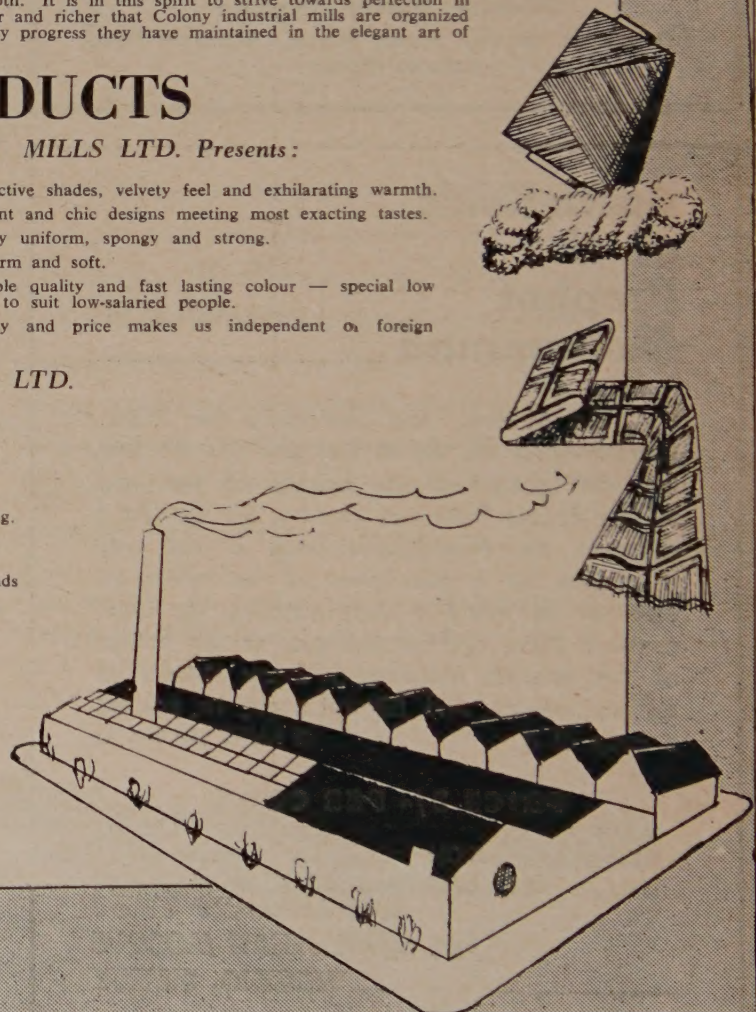
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# Between Ourselves

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# The Islamic Review

AUGUST : 1955

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## THE COVER

The beautiful picture on the Cover is that of the *Mihrab* of the Yeni Jami' (the New Mosque), one of the most famous mosques for which Istanbul, Turkey, is rightly famous. The mosque is the result of piety of the mothers of three successive Sultans of Turkey. The building was begun in 1598 C.E. and completed some time in the middle of the seventeenth century. In the picture the strikingly beautiful Arabic lettering can be observed.

The Turks are famous for the exquisite mural engraving of Arabic. This art, however, owing to the introduction of the Latin script in Turkey, is fast dying.

## TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS AND CONTRIBUTORS

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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"Muhammad is . . . the Messenger of God and the Last of the Prophets . . ." — THE HOLY QUR'AN 33 : 40  
"There will be no Prophet after me" — THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

VOL. XLIII No. 8

AUGUST, 1955

Zu 'l-Hijjah, 1374 A.H.-Muharram, 1375 A.H.

# THE TRUTH ABOUT ISLAM

### Unknown or distorted

The truth about Islam is still, on the whole, unknown to the man in the street in the Western world. It is even unknown, or grossly distorted, to the greater part of the Muslims themselves.

Thirteen centuries have passed since the beginning of Muhammad's Call. These thirteen centuries saw many changes in the fashions in which people understood Islam and reacted towards it. But to the majority of non-Muslims until this day, Islam is nothing but a call to military aggression in order to impose political dominance. Territorial aggression — that is what most non-Muslims today associate with Islam.

### How the dangerous fiction first arose

It must be admitted that this erroneous and dangerous fiction about Islam has its roots deep in history. It was planted in the minds of the people of Europe in the days when the pioneering forces of Islam surged forward under the banner of Abu 'Ubaida, Khalid Ibn al-Waleed, 'Amr Ibn al-'As, Musa Ibn Nusair, Tariq Ibn Ziyad, and many other famous Muslim military leaders. They conquered one country after another and laid low many defences and obstacles which stood in their way. It was not long before Islam had unchallenged control of a great part of Africa and Asia and not a small part of Europe. Muslim armies knocked at the doors of Constantinople and Rome. People in many countries looked upon Islam with respect and with awe. But not many people outside the Muslim domain nursed any feelings of love for Islam and the people of Islam. They were afraid that the forces of Islam would one day knock at their doors and lay low their castles and fortifications.

Then came the Crusades, during which zealous Christians poured forth from Europe into the Middle East only to find death at the swords of tenacious Muslims who had dug their feet deep in their countries and defended them with everything at their command. To many in Europe today Islam brings back bitter memories of the Crusades that failed.

There are many non-Muslims today who look upon Islam as the germ of a racial struggle between Arians and

Semites, with the Semites seeking to march forward under the banner of religion to subdue other races and claim ascendancy over them.

### Islam's truth and its history are two different things

All these views about Islam and prejudices against it are categorically wrong. It is true that they have some slight foundation, and that they arose in conjunction with some phases through which Islam has passed in one era or another during its long history. This being so, we should like to emphasize that the truth about Islam is one thing and its history another. The people of Islam, who portrayed Islam to the West, were not always living strictly according to the teachings of their faith. They deviated from the right path in more than one era of their history. Islam is a religion which was made known through the Prophet Muhammad, and which he helped to explain and make clear to his people. But the history of the Muslims is nothing but a record of events which were affected one way or another by surrounding circumstances and by diverse reactions and counter-reactions.

### What some Muslims think of Islam

While we advise those who are seeking to find the truth about the religion of Islam to beware of taking too much into consideration on certain phases of the history of the people of Islam, we should also like to warn them against placing too much reliance on what the Muslims think today of Islam. There are among the Muslims themselves many differences of view about the religion of Islam. Many of the Muslims are far from knowing fully what the religion which they profess really is. And very few are living strictly in accordance with the teachings of the religion which they profess.

To some Muslims today Islam means nothing more than formal rites and seasonal or daily acts of prayer and worship. Many render these formalities out of a vague sense of devotion or piety, while others render them merely as a result of a deep-rooted habit. To other Muslims Islam is a refuge by which they escape from life. Others argue about free will and predestination, while others indulge in arguments about the Originator and the originated, or contemplate over the beautiful attributes of God. There are some Muslims who look upon Islam as the faith of the "chosen



people" and consequently look down upon non-Muslims as under-privileged people. There are many "sects" and schools of thought which hold tenaciously to particular aspects of Islam, and profess views upon certain doctrines which are at variance with the views professed by other schools. In short, there are many different views upon Islam among the Muslims themselves.

### What the true Islam is

But this is not to say that there are no Muslims who know what Islam really is or who have a proper appreciation of the religion which they profess and seek to model their lives according to its teachings. They are many and found all over the world, and they are by no means an insignificant minority.

The true Islam — which is the Islam revealed to the Prophet Muhammad and explained by him to his Companions and people — is a system which seeks to propagate the spiritual welfare of man and his material welfare on this earth. Its sources are the Qur'án and the Sayings and Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad. From these and from the writings of Muslim jurists who lived during the early days of Islam we can have a clear idea about this religion and be able to understand it fully.

Islam is a constitution and a code. It lays down certain rules which, if complied with by man, will secure for him prosperity and happiness on this earth and a rich reward in the life to come. Islam decrees that all men are equal in the eyes of God, and that one man can claim no supremacy over

another on grounds of race or colour. What makes one man superior to another in the eyes of God is his good deeds. In Islam man can have direct access to his God; he needs no intermediaries or go-betweens, for there is no priesthood in Islam, although there are people who, because they have studied Islam more thoroughly, are permitted to advise their fellows as to what Islam is. With equality before God there is also equality before the law in Islam. Islam requires no act of worship from its followers save where that act is in the dominant interest of society and in the interests of the worshipper himself. Islam permits man to enjoy on this earth all that is good for him, and nothing is forbidden to man save that which is to his detriment. Islam provides a perfect way of democratic government which regulates the affairs of society and makes proper balance between the interests of the individual and the interests of the group. It is a system that in essence holds good for all times and for all places.

This is not mere assumption. Any intelligent person can verify these statements by reference to the Qur'án and the Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad. The Qur'án will not take him long to read, and we can guarantee to him who reads the Qur'án for the first time that he will meet with a great surprise. He will be greatly amazed to find that many of the sublime doctrines of freedom, justice, equality and fraternity which the civilized world in the twentieth century is still endeavouring hard to formulate and determine in protracted international conferences are no new discoveries. They are all there in the book of Islam which was revealed some thirteen hundred years ago.

---

## THE GARDEN OF CONTENTMENT

### IV. PATIENCE

How can the Garden best be won, best kept?  
What adamant bond shall keep it fast, that none  
Shall e'er disturb that paradise of blessedness, once won?

*Patience* — the chosen ones whom God doth love  
Bear that blest impress in their heart of hearts, nor may  
Misfortune's dark storm darting ever quench that gentle ray.

Only by patience shall the world be won  
To peace and prosperous paths of blessedness.  
Only by long endurance shall the race be run  
That brings success eternal, to behold the Sun,  
The Countenance Belovéd, in the bright Garden gleaming,  
For ever and a day on our delight down-streaming.  
God loveth the enduring, the patient in distress.  
Grant us Thy Grace, O Lord, with hands of bounteousness!

William Bashyr Pickard.





The dotted portions in the map show the two wings of Pakistan, each separated from the other by about 1,000 miles of Indian territory

# THE CONCEPT OF ISLAMIC COMMUNITY AND MODERN THEORIES OF NATIONALITY

## THE EMERGENCE OF PAKISTAN

By A. K. Najmul Karim

**"The two parts of Pakistan decided to remain within a single State on the basis of religion and not to merge themselves into a greater Indian federation. Territory, therefore, became a secondary factor in the evolution of such a State. This is a strange phenomenon in the present-day political history of the world. The Pakistani nationalism which evolved out of peculiar Indian conditions will therefore create important forces in the future."**

### An analysis of the concept of "community"

For the last century the Hindu-Muslim problem remained the crux of Indian politics, and all attempts at a solution were doomed to failure. But hardly anybody thought that the solution of the problem lay in the partition of India. In fact, the idea of a separate and independent State of Pakistan was thought to be visionary and quite unpracticable, even according to the views of the representative Muslim political leaders. The outside world always took India as a single political unit, and therefore the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan in 1940 was taken as a propaganda measure designed to get a greater share in Indian administration. Many impartial writers honestly believed that the Muslim League's proposed Pakistan was an economic impossibility and argued that the heavy costs of defence and civil administration would cause a considerable fall in the standard of living of its people. In spite of such genuine apprehensions, Pakistan came into existence in 1947, when the British ultimately decided to transfer power. The emergence of Pakistan is a strange phenomenon in the present-day world; because Pakistan claims to have welded about 75,000,000 people living in two geographical areas,

separated by more than 1,000 miles, into a homogeneous (Pakistani) nation.

Pakistan and Indonesia are the two largest Muslim States in the world and, as such, they are destined to play very important roles in the international politics of the Muslim world. In such a context, the analysis of the concept of the Islamic community, which was at the basis of the creation of the separate State of Pakistan, would undoubtedly interest inquisitive readers of world affairs and international politics.

The term "community" has been used in Indian political parlance in a special sense.<sup>1</sup> It generally refers to religious groups. So the Hindu or the Muslim religious group is referred to as the Hindu or the Muslim community.

<sup>1</sup> It may be helpful at this stage to define the words "communal" and "communalism". The words are in daily use in India, but probably not elsewhere. The Hindus and Muslims of India are spoken of as "communities". The friction that unfortunately exists between them is called "communal friction" or "communalism", and the problem it represents is called the "communal problem".—R. G. Casey, *An Australian in India* (London, Hollis and Carter, 1947). Mr. R. G. Casey was the Governor of Bengal from 1944-46.



The Hindu-Muslim communal problem therefore refers to the religious antagonism that exists between these two religious groups.

But the term "community" is also used in the social sciences and a definite meaning is attached to it by modern writers. For the analysis of the nature of the Indian Islamic community we may take any of the following definitions: "Whenever any group, small or large, live together in such a way that they share, not this or that particular interest, but the basic conditions of common life, we call that group a community".<sup>2</sup> Or: "Community springs up from nature; I mean from the reaction and adjustment of human nature to a given historical environment, or to the factual impact of the industrial or commercial society in question upon the natural conditioning of human existence".<sup>3</sup>

To avoid the confusion of terms, K. B. Krishna<sup>4</sup> in his treatise on the *Problem of Minorities in India* used the term "historical community" to denote the sense in which the term "community" is used by Western writers in scientific treatises.

### Mr. Jinnah's "two-nations" theory

But in recent times, the term "nation" has been used to denote the characteristic differences that exist between the Hindus and Muslims inhabiting the common land of the Indian sub-continent. Hence, Mr. Jinnah's "two-nations" theory:

"In his presidential address to the Lahore session of the League in 1940, Jinnah declared that the Indian Muslims were not merely a religious community but formed a distinct nation. 'The problem of India is not of an inter-communal character, but manifestly of an international one (*sic*), and it must be treated as such. So long as this basic and fundamental truth is not realized, any constitution that may be built will result in disaster. . . . If the British Government is really in earnest and sincere to secure peace and happiness of the people of this sub-continent, the only course open to us all is to allow major nations separate homelands by dividing India into autonomous national States.'"<sup>5</sup>

The main argument of Jinnah's two-nation theory was that in the peculiar situation in India, Muslims and Hindus constituted themselves into two distinct social groups, which had almost all the characteristics of two distinct nations. For those two nations, therefore, two separate national homelands became necessary — Pakistan and India. Pakistan was to become the homeland of the Pakistani nation. The basic reason for the partition of India was therefore the "fundamental" separateness of Hindus and Muslims, which stood in the way of the formation of the bond by which they could live in the same State under a united Indian Government.

### The basis of Muslim nationalism — Islamic "community"

To appreciate properly the nature of the growth of Indian Muslim separatism, it is necessary for us to analyse the basic conceptions of "Muslim brotherhood" or "Islamic community". We shall next examine how such a notion of "Muslim brotherhood" or "Islamic community" helped to accelerate the growth of separatist tendencies among the Muslims in India.

Right from the Medina Charter of Hijrah I, faith in God and the Prophet's mission, with the concomitant adherence to the precepts, has been the basic bond of the Islamic community. Such a conception of the Islamic community was of course based upon the ancient Arab tribal notions of community life. For building up his new Islamic community the Prophet Muhammad retained the Arab tribal organization in all its essential features, changing only one feature. The structure of the tribal organization of Arabia

was built upon blood kinship. A group of men descending, or claiming descent, from a common ancestor produced the Arab tribe. Thus, the Arab tribe was a family writ large. Muhammad pulled down the traditional Arab tribe and the traditional Arab family and replaced these with the 'community (or *Ummah*) of the Prophet Muhammad'. Henceforward, there was to be no question of tribal confederation, clientship, and so forth. All who had faith in Islam were to constitute one community. "Muslims," says a Hadith (tradition of the Prophet), "are like one hand, like a compact wall whose bricks support each other".<sup>6</sup> Thus the people of the Prophet Muhammad are the members of a large family and the members of this family are like the citizens of the platonic republic, according to which the members of the community should share pains and pleasure to the same extent as the members of the same body.<sup>7</sup> So the Prophet Muhammad recalled the Arab society to its primitive beginnings and built up a social structure which appealed to its deepest instincts.

### The two causes responsible for the absence of the notion of territory in the concept of the Islamic community

In our earlier definition of the term community, we have observed that in the conception of the term community, territory is an important factor. The Islamic community of which we are speaking lacks this quality of a community. Such a notion of community we find in Christian Europe when the sense of society was confined to the body of believers. In early medieval Europe, therefore, "the Church and community were reckoned as one and indivisible, and unbelievers and heretics were the outcasts from society".<sup>8</sup>

The two main causes of the absence of the notion of territory in the Islamic community are as follows. First, because the Islamic community evolved from the tribal organization of Arabs. In tribal organization, it is well known that it is kinship and not territory which is important. In the second place, because the Arab Beduins were mostly nomads and, in a nomadic and pastoral civilization, territory always became a secondary factor in social organization. The prime factor in the social organization is the effective tribal unity and effective tribal leadership. Even for the agri-

2 R. M. MacIver, *Society* (New York, Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., Publishers, 1937), p. 59: "By a community I mean any idea of common life. . . . To deserve the name of community the area somehow must be distinguished from further areas . . .". R. W. MacIver, *Community* (New York, Macmillan and Company, 1924).

3 Jacques Maritain, *Man and the State* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951).

4 K. B. Krishna, *Problem of Minorities in India* (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1939).

5 A. R. Desai, *Background of Indian Nationalism* (Bombay: Indian Branch of Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, 1948).

6 D. De Santillana in *The Legacy of Islam*, edited by T. Arnold and A. Guillaume (Oxford, 1931). D. De Santillana in the above book in a chapter on "Law and Society" has treated well the concept of Islamic community. A good treatment of the concept is also to be found in the following: D. P. Mukherjea, *Modern Indian Culture* (Bombay, India, 1948), p. 42 ff; Eric R. Wolf, "The Social Organization of Mecca and the Rise of Islam," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 7, No. 4, Winter, 1951, pp. 344-352, section on "Emergence of the Islamic State".

7 How strongly this belief of one community of all Muslims still moulds the ideas of the Indian Muslims will be evident from the following quotation: "All Muslims, whether they live in Pakistan or Hindustan, constitute one nation, as we of Pakistan must treat our co-religionists in Hindustan (that is, India) as flesh of our flesh and blood of our blood", F. K. Khan Durrani, *The Meaning of Pakistan* (Lahore, Pakistan, 1944).

8 R. M. MacIver, *Modern State*, *op. cit.*



cultural tribes of Arabia, the necessity of migration was always in the mind of the people. In the Arabia of the days of the Prophet Muhammad the attachment to geography did not grow. The teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, therefore, emphasized above everything else the necessity of the unity of his newly-created *ummah*, or the Islamic community, and unflinching obedience to the leader of this community. This therefore explained why the "All-India Muslim League Party" could make such a phenomenal success within a very short period, while it made an appeal emphasizing the separate character of the Indian Islamic community. This also explains why geographical nationalism did not become an important factor in the development of Indian Muslim nationalism. This will also partly explain why the two parts of Pakistan, separated by more than 1,000 miles, could evolve into one State.

In the above sense, Muslims all over the world form one community, and therefore it has been the ideal of the Muslim religious leaders to realize that community in practice. The roots of the Pan-Islamic movement,<sup>9</sup> the Wahhabi movement, and other such revivalist movements, had always such a background — that is, the realization of the ideal of a universal Islamic community. The advocates of such a universal Islamic community are apt to forget and to minimize national differences. So far as Arabia is concerned, the Prophet Muhammad's system worked wonderfully well, because the Arabs long before Muhammad had developed strong bonds of unity through tribal fairs and a common language. The Prophet Muhammad only hastened the process of the development of one Arab nation.

But as soon as Islam spread outside the Arab peninsula, the inevitable break came. The urge for a common mode of life, as we have found, is always insistent in the Islamic system, and therefore some smaller communities in the outlying Provinces of the Arabian peninsula, with the Arab invasion, quickly changed their language for the Arabic language and adopted the life of the "true" Arab.<sup>10</sup> But when Islam came to Persia, for instance, religious conversion did not necessarily mean cultural assimilation. Soon also arose in Islamic history the distinction between the Arab and the non-Arab.<sup>11</sup>

**The Muslims of India have been singularly conscious of their communal cohesion in contrast to the recent strong territorial and nationalistic trends in the rest of the Muslim world of today**

In recent times we find that all over the Muslim world strong nationalistic trends have developed. The Arabs do not speak of a Pan-Islamic federation, but of a Pan-Arab federation. But the development of Islam in India has been of a very peculiar nature. In spite of the diverse languages and cultures to which the Indian Muslim belonged, Muslim religious leaders have always been highly conscious of the Muslims within India as a supposedly single cohesive community, to which they devoted their loyalty, paying little attention to Muslims outside India.<sup>12</sup> Speaking about the late growth of nationalism among the Indian Muslims, A. R. Desai says:

"Another factor which retarded the growth of nationalism among the Indian Muslims was the basic character of Islam. Islam emphasizes more fanatically than any other religion the unity of its followers. Islam preaches a world fraternity of its followers, Islam is a cosmopolitan union of the Muslims all over the world. Islam offers greater resistance to the growth of nationalism, which has a limited national territorial basis. Islam gives rise to Pan-Islamism or humanism. When a country is preponderantly inhabited by the Muslims (Arabia, Turkey), and where capitalistic economic development has taken place, the Muslims of that country become nationalists and evolve national consciousness."<sup>13</sup>

The capitalist development under the British colonial régime in India took place in the latter part of the nineteenth century. From the early part of the twentieth century, Muslims were also participating in such a capitalist development of India. But the development of nationalism among Indian Muslims has been peculiar. Islam in India had to combat both British imperialism and the ever-present danger of its complete assimilation by the Hindu religion. Thus, H. A. R. Gibb in his book, *Modern Trends in Islam*, says, "In contrast with the Arab lands, Islam in India can never free itself from its setting over against the vast Hindu majority; and this of necessity forces social and political issues into the context of religious life."<sup>14</sup> Therefore, in spite of the internationalist nature of the Islamic community, we find in the predominantly Muslim-inhabited countries of the Near and Middle East the development of territorial nationalism with the expansion of capitalist enterprise in those countries, but in India owing to the above causes referred to by H. A. R. Gibb, this has not been the case. During the Muslim rule in India, Islam could survive the efforts of assimilation by the Hindu religion because of its superior political power. Under the British rule that superior strength was gone. The British introduced into India superior technology, and the benefits of such a technology were primarily showered upon the Hindu community. In such a situation the Muslim religious leaders found that they could only combat such a change by developing a revivalist attitude. It was therefore claimed by the Muslim religious leaders of the nineteenth century that the survival of Islam in India, nay of the whole Islamic world, depended upon the revival of the ideal of early Islam. According to their view, Muslim nations all over the world were being defeated by powerful European nations, because Muslims deviated from the pristine purity of early Islam. Such a view emphasized the necessity of the rejection of all the Hindu influences which Islam in India had gathered in the course of its existence in India. It therefore emphasized the separate character of the Islamic social polity all the more.

Again, the revivalist doctrine has a tendency to develop totalitarianism, because the revivalists insist on the conformity of the community to a supposedly idyllic culture of the past. It emphasizes group values and standards. It gives the sanction of religion to that. It stirs the soul to the depths.

9 "Pan-Islamism, which in its broadest sense is the feeling of solidarity between all 'True Believers', is as old as the Prophet, when Mohammed and his few followers were bound together by the tie of faith against their pagan compatriots who sought their destruction. To Mohammed the principle of fraternal solidarity among Muslims was of transcendent importance, and he succeeded in implanting this so deeply in Moslem hearts that thirteen centuries have not sensibly weakened it. The bond between Moslem and Moslem is today much stronger than that between Christian and Christian. Of course, Moslems fight bitterly among themselves, but these conflicts never quite lose the aspect of family quarrels and tend to be adjourned in the presence of infidel aggression." Stoddard Lothrop, *The New World of Islam* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921).

10 S. Khuda Bukhsh, *Studies: Indian and Islamic* (London, 1927, p. 114: "With conversion the foreigner acquired the rights of citizenship. He made good his claim to the State annuity and shared in all the privileges of the ruling race. Simultaneously with conversion he renounced his language and nationality, and hastened to exchange them for the Arabic language and the Arab nationality".

11 *Ibid.*

12 "Muslim communalists, for instance, are highly conscious of the Muslims within India as a supposedly single, cohesive community, to which they devote their loyalty . . . paying little attention to Muslims outside India." W. C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India*, London, 1946.

13 A. R. Desai, *op. cit.*

14 H. A. R. Gibb, *Modern Trends in Islam* (Chicago, U.S.A., 1945).



Therefore, the identification of religion with the community life was but natural on the part of the Muslim religious revivalists of India under the British rule.

Besides the revivalist philosophy, the development of community feeling among the Muslims under the British rule was also due to Hindu-Muslim conflicts resulting in bloody riots.

We shall now turn to an examination of these conflicts and their causes. We shall discern a remarkable absence of clashes between Hindus and Muslims in the days of Muslim rule.

### History of Hindu-Muslim conflicts

Indian history shows many instances where Muslim subjects fought under the overlordship of their Hindu rajahs against Muslim invaders. At the same time we find instances where Hindus fought under the overlordship of Muslim nawabs and emperors against Hindu rajahs. During the Muslim rule the political allegiance was therefore primarily based upon feudal relationship and not upon religion.<sup>15</sup> Thus, R. Palme Dutt says:

"Prior to British rule there is no trace of the type of Hindu-Muslim conflicts associated with British rule, and especially with the latest period of the British rule. There were wars between States which might have Hindu or Muslim rulers; but these wars at no time took on the character of a Hindu-Muslim antagonism. Muslim rulers employed Hindus freely in the highest positions, and vice versa."<sup>16</sup>

The history of Hindu-Muslim conflicts has recently been traced by R. Coupland in his famous book, *The Constitutional Problem of India*. But he has failed to cite even one instance of such conflicts from the Muslim period. Even the earlier part of the British rule is left untainted by any record of such Hindu-Muslim conflicts. R. Coupland says:

"The record of Hindu-Muslim rioting in India is long and tragic. The earliest serious case in the British records is the outbreak at Benares in 1809, in which the deliberate insult inflicted on that sacred city by the erection of a mosque on its sacred site by the Moghul Emperor a century before was at last avenged by the Hindus. Several hundred people were killed and some fifty mosques were destroyed. Happily that tragedy is unique, and indeed for over seventy years, though there were minor disorders from time to time, there appear to be no serious outbreaks except in 1871 and 1872."<sup>17</sup>

### The communal problems of India the product of British rule

On the whole, during the Muslim rule the necessity for religious tolerance was always recognized. We can, therefore, safely conclude that the communal problem is particularly the product of the British rule. Under the British rule, Hindus ceased to be the subjects of the Muslims and the Muslims ceased to be the ruling class. Both the communities attained the same status under the tutelage of their common master, that is, the British. In fact the rising Hindu commercial and professional classes got better opportunities and better patronage from their British masters. It has even been argued in recent times that the British deliberately created Hindu-Muslim cleavages in pursuance of their imperialistic policy. Thus, K. S. Shelvankar says:

"That the communal differences, particularly the differences between the Hindus and Muslims, could be exploited with advantage, was realized quite early in the nineteenth century. In 1821 a writer in the *Asiatic Journal* said: '*Divide et impera* should be the motto of our Indian administration'; and the view was supported by an army officer who likewise pronounced that 'our endeavour should be to uphold in full force the (for us, fortunate) separation which exists between the different religions and races; not to endeavour to amalgamate them!' The policy was officially endorsed in 1858 by Lord Elphinstone, the Governor-General.

"Till the end of the century, it was the Muslims who were singled out for official disfavour."<sup>18</sup>

There is much truth in the above assertion. But by shifting the blame on to the shoulders of the British, our attention is taken away from the fundamental nature of the Hindu-Muslim question. It can only simplify and therefore falsify the issue. The *Maulana* Muhammad 'Ali, the great nationalist leader, therefore argued that there is much truth in the assertion that the British pursued the policy of *divide and rule*. He says, "But there is a division of labour here. We divide and the British rule."<sup>19</sup>

We have earlier said that the Hindu-Muslim differences never did become an acute political problem during the Muslim rule. A natural conclusion is therefore that the British deliberately created such acute Hindu-Muslim political tensions for imperialistic purposes. But this does not contain the whole truth. During the Muslim rule, the Hindu-Muslim separateness existed, but, because of feudalism, it could never become an acute mass problem. The British capitalist enterprise shattered the former basis of the economic foundation of the community. It therefore meant that henceforward political power would not be in the hands of a few feudal chiefs, but would have a mass basis. While the British transferred power, they had to transfer it to two democratically constituted authorities, and such authorities had their mass basis in the two great divisions of the society — Hindu and Muslim. That the British would have ultimately to transfer power became evident from the trends of Indian politics, and the realization of this fact embittered the Hindu-Muslim relationships with increasing communal tensions.

### Over-emphasis on economic reasons behind Hindu-Muslim conflicts

In a great many recent writings, the economic reason behind the Hindu-Muslim conflicts has been stressed. I shall here cite a few typical examples:

"In other words, I believe that the principal present-day motive behind Pakistan is economic, the urge on the part of the Muslims (particularly in the cities) to advance themselves economically in the world and to get away from being the hewers of wood and drawers of water for the caste Hindus" (R. G. Casey, former Governor of Bengal, by nationality an Australian, in his book, *An Australian in India*).

"Capitalist society is favourable to the growth of communalism. Indian capitalist society is especially favourable to the growth of Muslim communalism. All over the world the petty *bourgeoisie*, small traders, small independent producers, and the like, are being slowly forced into ruin, at the very best into the fear of it, by 'big business'. Now the big business in India is owned and controlled either by foreigners, or by a few men who are, incidentally, Hindus or Parsis. Many of the petty *bourgeois* who are Muslims are ready to believe in the danger of non-Muslims oppressing them. The same applied even to village artisans and pro-capitalists who are being ruined

15 From the history of Bengal we learn that the Muslim subjects of Hindu feudal chiefs of Bengal, such as Chand Rai and Kedar Rai, during the reign of the Emperor Akbar fought against the Moghal invaders of Bengal under the overlordship of their Hindu chiefs. Similarly, the Moghal army also consisted of Hindu garrisons which fought against Hindu rajahs. Such records of fights show that the political allegiance in those days was based upon feudal relationships. Bengali nationalism or Muslim nationalism did not exist at that time. Hindu-Muslim separateness existed in those days in the social and religious life; it did not affect the political aspect. The glimpses of such exclusiveness of the Hindus and Muslims in the social and religious fields can be found in the old literature of the country. For this see Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sen, *History of Bengali Language and Literature* (Calcutta, 1911), pp. 792-800.

16 R. P. Dutt, *The Problem of India* (New York, 1943).

17 R. Coupland, *The Indian Problem, 1833-1935* (London, 1943).

18 K. S. Shelvankar, *The Problem of India* (London, 1944).

19 R. Coupland, *ibid*.



by the advent of machine-made goods" (W. C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India*, London 1946).

"The communal question is largely a question of posts and preferences. The 'communal tension' is largely a question of popular discontent. Whether in the case of communal question (or the demand for communal representation), or in the case of so-called 'communal tensions', the real economic causes are masked by religious causes" (K. B. Krishna, *Problem of Minorities in India*).

It is true that behind the communal problems in India, some economic reasons could always be traced, but the economic factor behind communalism has been over-emphasized. The leadership of the Indian National Congress thought that economic programmes for mass uplift would appeal to Indian Muslims and therefore they minimized the necessity of a Hindu-Muslim concordat for the solution of the cultural problem. Indian political parties based primarily on economic programmes, such as the Bengal Proja Party, the Punjab Unionist Party, the Indian Communist Party, also made the same mistake by minimizing the importance of the cultural problem.<sup>20</sup> It is true, behind the demand for all religious, political or cultural rights is the economic cause, but, whenever out of such an economic background the demand for those rights arises, it gains its own momentum. Such forces become more powerful than the economic forces which created them. Therefore, the calculation which is based on economic determinism might be wrong for political solutions. Thus, the Indian communal problem became an acute cultural problem and the Indian political leadership failed to solve such a cultural problem, because they over-emphasized the economic factor. Beni Prasad says:

"They (the Congress leaders) expected their economic programmes to rally the Muslim masses to their political creed and thus to create a nation-wide party above all sectarianism and denominationalism. They were not Marxists, but, like many other socialists and non-socialists, they had been influenced by the materialist conception of history — the economic determinism. . . . Unilinear ways of thinking may warp the Indian socialist's judgment on internal as well as external affairs. It was an over-simplification of the Marxian analysis to conclude in 1937 that an appeal to the economic interest would under all circumstances push aside the appeal in the name of religion, culture or political rights."<sup>21</sup>

### The idea of an Indian Muslim nation and the emergence of Pakistan

By the end of the nineteenth century the nationalist aspirations of the Indian Muslims were crystallizing, in spite of their strong heritage and a cultural background for non-territorial Islamic internationalism. By the thirties of the present century the notion of a "Muslim nation in India"<sup>22</sup> was gradually developing. Indian Muslims realized that they must work out their own salvation and then only might they be of some good to the Muslims of other countries. Iqbal is said to have given a definite shape to such an aspiration of the Indian Muslims. Iqbal said in his presidential address to the All-India Muslim League in 1930:

"I would like to see the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State. Self-government within the British Empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims at least of North-West India."<sup>23</sup>

This was, however, a pious wish expressed by Iqbal, and until 1940 no concrete plan was drawn up by the All-India Muslim League for the realization of the ideal of a separate Muslim State. In 1937, provincial legislatures were reconstituted under the Government of India Act, 1935, which enlarged the franchise and provided for autonomy by the Provinces in the provincial spheres. The administration of the country, therefore, created a mass basis for itself which

gave birth to a great political awakening in India. In this context, the Hindu-Muslim problem now sought a satisfactory solution. Indian Muslims for long had been a community bound by the common ties of Islam, and they regarded themselves as such. But now they aspired to be a nation. Their aspiration to become a nation found expression in their political organization called the "All-India Muslim League Party". The "All-India Muslim League" in its famous Lahore Resolution in 1940 gave a concrete shape to the prevailing idea of the Indian Muslims to become a nation. The Lahore Resolution states:

"Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, viz., that geographically contiguous units are demarcated in regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in North-Western and Eastern Zones of India, should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States' in which constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign."<sup>24</sup>

### Hindus and Muslims in undivided India did not constitute a nation

The claim of nationhood and Statehood by the Indian Muslims in 1940 has been challenged by some, while supported by others. The main argument put forward in support of the claim of nationalism of the Indian Muslims was the subjective aspect of nationalism. Dr. Ambedkar, a prominent Hindu scheduled caste leader, in his book, *Thoughts on Pakistan*, quotes the French writer, Renan, in support of the Muslim view:

"A nation is a living soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul, this spiritual principle. One is in the past, and the other is in the present. One is the common possession of a rich heritage of memories; the other is the actual consent, the desire to live together, the will to preserve worthily the undivided inheritance which has been handed down."<sup>25</sup>

Dr. Ambedkar says that, judged by the above definition of nationality, Hindus and Muslims in undivided India did not constitute a nation. According to his view, the crux of the Hindu-Muslim problem lay in the fact that there was no common cycle of participation for common achievement. He says, "Their past is a past of mutual destruction — a past

20 Both the Bengal Proja Party (Peasants' Party) and the Punjab Unionist Party, though non-communal in their political programmes, were primarily Muslim parties. But in spite of their attractive economic programmes for mass uplift they ultimately lost the confidence of the Muslims. With the emergence of the movement for Pakistan, both parties eventually completely disappeared from the political scene. The Communist Party seems to have idealistic appeal to some sections of the Muslim intellectuals, but it has practically no mass following in Pakistan.

21 Beni Prasad, *India's Hindu-Muslim Questions* (London, 1946).

22 "A reaction has, however, set in owing to growing realization of the fact that other Muslim countries, such as Turkey, have become nationally self-centred and take little interest in their co-religionists in India. Muslims are beginning to feel that, for the sake of self-preservation, they must foster and develop a sense of national consciousness, as the Hindus have, and work out their salvation by their own efforts. The phrase 'Muslim nation in India' has been coined" (L. S. S. O'Malley, ed., *Modern India and the West*, London, 1941). (Italics mine—Ed.)

23 A. R. Desai, *op. cit.* At first the idea of Pakistan did not include what is now called East Pakistan. Later on the predominantly Muslim majority areas of East India were also included in the idea of Pakistan.

24 *Ibid.*

25 B. R. Ambedkar, *Thoughts on Pakistan* (Bombay, 1941).



of mutual animosities, both in the political as well as in the religious fields."<sup>26</sup>

Dr. Ambedkar and others who supported the claim of the nationhood of the Indian Muslims generally stressed the subjective aspect and minimized the objective aspect of nationality. Ambedkar further quotes Renan, "That race must not be confounded with nation. . . . Language invites reunion; it does not force it. . . . It is no more the land than the race that makes a nation."<sup>27</sup>

### In modern notions of nationality territory is not regarded as the most important factor

According to the above view the roots of nationalism are to be sought in the psychological make-up of the people and not in the objective sphere. Ernest Barker defines nationalism as "subjective, psychological, a spiritual possession, a way of living, thinking and feeling". He says, "It is a psychological cobweb of threads, which are spun from mind to mind". He further argues that any mechanical interpretation of the roots of nationality is bound to break down, because a nation is not a race, language or geographical unity; but it is the subjective manifestation of a people aspiring to be a nation.<sup>28</sup> The objective tests of language, race, country have no significance without the subjective factor. Nationalism means a "spiritual survival". It means that a people think of themselves as a nation and aspire to an independent existence in the comity of free nations of the world. They might be ignorant in trying to be so, but it is at least theirs. There is no use blaming them. The Muslims of undivided India, owing to some historical processes, came to believe themselves a distinct nation, and demanded Pakistan as their national homeland, because, a prominent writer says, "A nation without a homeland is like a soul without the body" (Hayes).

Therefore, we find in such modern notions of nationality that territory is not the most important factor. The claim of the Indian Muslims to nationhood could not be challenged in the subjective field. It was pointed out that many modern writers insist that "a nation is a nation when it feels itself to be a nation". The All-India Muslim League in its claim for the separate nationhood for the Indian Muslims won the psychological test in the general elections that were held in India in 1945-46, after the termination of the Second World War.

### The material basis of nationality

In opposition to the above view of nationality, other schools also came forward with their definitions. Their arguments were based on the writings of such Western scholars who generally emphasized the material basis of nationality, as opposed to the spiritual basis. Thus K. B. Krishna says:

"Religion does not make a nation. Hindu or Muslim nationalism is another name for communalism. Hindus and Muslims are not nations or lasting historical communities in the sense that they are not readily determined by an area necessary for common life."<sup>29</sup>

Mr. Gandhi opposed the idea of separate nationhood of the Indian Muslims on the same ground:

"The 'two nation theory' is an untruth. The vast majority of Muslims in India are converts to Islam or are descendants of converts. . . . My whole soul rebels against the idea that Hinduism and Islam represent two antagonistic doctrines. . . . But that is my belief. I cannot thrust it down the throats of the Muslims who think that they are a different nation."<sup>30</sup>

It is, however, curious to note that the Indian Communist Party, in spite of a definite thesis by Stalin,

"Marxism and the National and Colonial Question," supported the Pakistan movement. But their stand was a bit different from the stand of the Muslim League. Dr. G. Adhikari, a prominent leader of the party, writes:

"The demand for Pakistan, if we look at its progressive essence, is in reality the demand for self-determination and separation of the areas of the Muslim nationalities of the Punjab, Pathans, Sind, Baluchistan and the Eastern Provinces of Bengal."<sup>31</sup>

According to their opinion, although there is an overall Muslim culture, which is common to all Muslims, Indian Muslims did not constitute a separate nation. P. C. Joshi, Secretary of the Party, said, "It is enough for us to say that the Indian Muslims cannot be regarded as a nation on the basis of their religion". Stalin in his thesis, "Marxism and the National and Colonial Question," definitely stressed the objective aspects and argued that the psychological superstructure of nationalism is the outcome of the material basis. He also laid stress primarily on language in national questions. But the Indian Communist Party regarded religion as one of the bases for a separate nationhood. They were not ready to accede to the assertion that all Indian Muslims constituted a separate nation. According to their view, the East Bengali or Sindhi Muslims, for example, constituted separate nations. They therefore were ready to accede to the demand for separate homelands for the East Bengali or Sindhi Muslims. In the peculiar Indian situation, they argued for the solution of the national problem by taking linguistic as well as religious factors into consideration.

Those who disagreed with the Muslim view that the Muslims of undivided India were a separate nation relied upon certain features of Indian social life, which seemed to form the bonds of integration between the Hindus and Muslims. It was argued that there was no difference of race between Hindus and Muslims; that the Punjabi Muslim and the Punjabi Hindu, Bengali Muslim and Bengali Hindu, were racially of one stock. Secondly, reliance was placed upon linguistic unity. It was pointed out that Muslims and Hindus inhabiting the same Province spoke the same provincial language. Thirdly, reliance was also placed on certain common features in the social and cultural life of the two communities, which were the result of a common environment to which both Hindus and Muslims had been subjected for centuries.

We need go no further into the controversy of the Indian national question here. The search for the roots of nationality by modern writers has proved itself to be chimerical, and conflicting views have been put forward. What we need stress here is that, in spite of the strong geographical differences between East and West Pakistan, the two parts of Pakistan decided to remain within a single State on the basis of religion and not merge themselves into a greater Indian federation. Territory, therefore, became a secondary factor in the evolution of such a State. This is a strange phenomenon in the present-day political history of the world. The Pakistani nationalism which evolved out of peculiar Indian conditions will therefore create important forces in the future.

26 B. R. Ambedkar, *Thoughts on Pakistan* (Bombay, 1941).

27 *Ibid.*

28 Ernest Barker, *National Character* (New York, 1927).

29 K. B. Krishna, *op. cit.* Italics mine.

30 A. R. Desai, *op. cit.*

31 G. Adhikari, *Pakistan and National Unity* (Bombay, 1944).



# THE MALAY MUSLIM COMMUNITY

## A STUDY OF THEIR AFFAIRS TYPICAL OF THE ENTIRE WORLD OF ISLAM

By Dato Megat 'Osman

*The Federation of Malaya consists of nine Sovereign Malay States and two British Settlements of Penang and Malacca. The nine Sovereign States are ruled by Muslim Sultans. The total population is about 5,227,000 and the area 50,597 square miles. There are 2,650,000 Muslims*



### The Malays and Islam

Despite the fact that Islam has been with the Malays for six centuries, the Malays have remained up to this day the poorest people in Malaya. As a people in their own country they are the most backward educationally, economically, industrially and politically, although they claim, and rightly claim, their religion to be a perfect code of life.

Malaya is one of the richest countries in the world, but owing to general ignorance its various sources of wealth have for nearly a century enriched only people other than the Muslims. Consequently the richest, most influential and strongest men are to be found today only among the foreign elements inhabiting the country, while the Malays are poverty-stricken and have come to be regarded as the "sick men" of Malaya.

Why is this so? The answer to this is that the Malays have during all these long centuries contented themselves only with the spiritual values of Islam, and totally neglected the material side; or, in other words, they have wholly ignored the material advantages offered by their great religion. That being so, it is imperative to eradicate ignorance root and branch and to replace it with knowledge, scientific and technical, in all useful branches.

Let me quote a few of the numerous teachings of God contained in His Holy Book:

- (1) "Proclaim! (or read) in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher Who created: He created man from a mere clot of congealed blood; Proclaim! and thy Lord is Most Bountiful. He taught the use of the pen — taught man that which he knew not" (96:1-5).

- (2) "God will exalt those of you who believe and those who are given knowledge to high degrees" (58:11).
- (3) "And say, O my Lord: increase me in knowledge" (20:114).
- (4) "And whoever is given knowledge is given indeed great wealth" (2:296).

And among the numerous sayings of the Prophet Muhammad showing the great importance of knowledge, let the following be quoted:

- (1) "The acquisition of knowledge is a duty on every Muslim, whether male or female."
- (2) "Acquire knowledge from the time of your infancy to the time of your death."
- (3) "Acquire knowledge, even if it be in China."
- (4) "Anyone wishing to have the world must acquire knowledge; anyone wishing to have the Hereafter must acquire knowledge; and anyone wishing to have both of these must acquire knowledge."
- (5) "Labour for your worldly welfare as if you were going to live for ever; and labour for your welfare in the Hereafter as if you were going to die on the next day."
- (6) "He who goes forth in search of knowledge is in the way of God till he returns."

The above teachings of God and His Prophet have always been available in the Qur'an and the Hadith. But little or no pains have ever been taken to teach these all-important books to their children in their own language, with



the result that about 99 per cent of the Malays who say they "know" the Qur'an know only how to read the Arabic language in which the book is written without understanding the meaning thereof. Generally speaking, both the Qur'an and the Hadith are now closed books to the Malay Muslims in that very few of them have properly studied them and learned anything from them.

### **How to eradicate ignorance and replace it with knowledge**

#### **(a) Religious education**

There are already in existence a great number of Islamic religious schools scattered in almost every town and village throughout the length and breadth of Malaya, some being run and maintained by the Government and others by private and individual subscribers.

Many of these schools have existed for thirty years or more and others have come into being only in more recent years. From the manner in which the Malays at present conduct themselves and their everyday affairs, it is safe to conclude that these so-called religious schools have signally failed to achieve the purpose for which they were established. The most important objective which each of these institutions should strenuously endeavour to accomplish is to implant or instil into the breast of each boy and girl the purest Islamic faith. For then the boy or girl will realize that Islam is a most natural and simple way of life and requires its followers only to worship the one and only God and to do good to all His creatures. The really sincere and well-instructed Muslim holds his religion to be the dominant factor in all his life and will do nothing contrary to the teachings of God and His Messenger Muhammad.

The greatest stress should now be laid upon the correct way of teaching Islam in all religious schools, not only in its spiritual aspects, but more especially in its material, economic and social aspects. The easiest way of effecting this, I believe, is by teaching both the Qur'an and the Hadith in the Malay language, instead of in Arabic as has been done and is being done now. This alone can put matters right for the future generations of Malays, who must expect days of the fiercest inter-racial competition in a self-governing Malaya of the not far distant future.

#### **(b) Secular education**

A system of giving the widest and highest possible technical, scientific, industrial, agricultural and commercial education and training to every Malay boy and girl in Malaya must at once be devised whereby every one of them who is well-fitted to receive it can be sent out every year to foreign countries, such as Europe, America, Japan, India and other countries to acquire further education and training. These boys and girls would be the future Malay leaders in their country after they have acquired the necessary education and training.

#### **(c) Agricultural, mining, economic, industrial and commercial development**

Malaya has almost unlimited scope and possibilities in the above fields of human activity. At present almost all

business in these spheres is in the hands of non-Malays, except perhaps paddy-planting, which is left more or less to the Malays for the simple reason that the profits from this industry are not sufficiently attractive to other people who want higher returns and easier work.

The Malays must enter such industrial fields as tin-mining, saw-milling, rubber-milling, rice-milling, aerated-water manufacture and a host of other industries which have made the foreign settlers so rich and prosperous.

There is evidence that the Government of the country is very anxious for the Malays to rise to the same economic level as the other communities inhabiting Malaya. Full assistance in the form of expert advice and guidance can therefore be expected from the Government, if the Malays would only find the necessary capital to embark upon such enterprises.

### **How to obtain funds for these proposals**

It is clear that the suggestions made above can be implemented by the Malay community of Malaya with the help of the Muslim Religious Council of each of the Malay States, which collects money each year from the Muslims in the shape of *Zakat* and *Sadaqat al-Fitr*.

I have already spoken of the illuminating teachings of God and His Prophet. From these it is clear that knowledge is the most important thing for humanity, and the present plight of the Malays has been due entirely to ignorance. The public funds collected in the form of *Zakat* and *Sadaqat al-Fitr*, should be used for the general rehabilitation, the economic uplift of the Malays from whom they are collected.

While it is true that the Qur'anic verse dealing with the use of *Zakat* money mentions eight different kinds of beneficiaries ("Only for the poor and the needy, and those who collect them (*Zakat* and *Sadaqat al-Fitr*) and those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and to free the captives and the debtors, and for the cause of God, and for the way-farer"), it is nowhere laid down that each category of beneficiaries is to receive one-eighth of the money. That being so, it appears that it is permissible to devote whatever balance remains after satisfying the requirements of the various beneficiaries specifically stated to the promotion of the general interests and well-being of the people from whom the money is received.

From the point of view of a layman, *Zakat* and *Sadaqat al-Fitr* money may and should be used even for financing such projects as have been suggested under (c) above. These projects, once they are started under expert guidance and advice, will serve as a training ground for the Malays, who will gain valuable knowledge and practical experience by being employed thereon.

To the rough outline of the plan sketched above I would add that the Malay community of each State should call a public meeting to elect a General Committee to act in their name and to demand of the State Religious Council its co-operation.





# THE HARNESSING OF THE TIGRIS, IRAQ<sup>1</sup>

## THE NEW KINGDOM OF IRAQ

### THE ELEVEN-MILLION-DINAR WADI THARTHAR PROJECT

*A map showing the location of the Wadi Tharthar Scheme  
in its geographical relation to Baghdad*

#### How the money from oil royalties is being spent

From time immemorial, whenever the twin rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, swollen by spring rains and melting snow, have overflowed their banks and inundated the countryside, causing damage to crops, destroying livestock and imperilling human life, Iraq has been the scene of devastating floods. Still fresh in the minds of many are the floods that swept Iraq in March 1954, swamping pasture lands and property, submerging roads and railways and threatening the very existence of Baghdad, the capital city. Losses ran into millions of dinars. A vast amount of time and money is spent each year in building up the embankments that control the flow of the Tigris and the Euphrates, but these measures, although reducing the risk of serious inundation in heavily populated areas like Baghdad, have never furnished an effective answer to the problem.

The need for a major, scientifically-controlled flood relief scheme to put to an end the risk of flooding in Iraq has, of course, long been realized by the authorities, but, until recently, the vast sum of money required to implement such a project could not be found.

Since the war, however, with a change of fortune brought about by an increase in revenues from oil, the Government has been able to embark on an I.D.155,000,000 (£155,000,000) programme of economic development, and no less than half of this has been set aside for irrigation and flood control schemes — the largest single project being the Wadi Tharthar Flood Relief Scheme, now being implemented, at a cost of about ID.11,000,000 (£11,000,000), on the Tigris, north of Baghdad. It is designed to end the

<sup>1</sup> Courtesy, the Editor, *Iraq Petroleum*, London, for March 1955.



disastrous floods that annually threaten the Tigris Valley, and to provide water for irrigation purposes and power.

### **The location of the project, sixty miles upstream from Baghdad.**

The actual location of the scheme cannot be pinpointed accurately as it is spread over a large area, but the main centre from which the work is being carried out is Saamurra, an historic Arab town founded by the Caliph al-Mu'tasim over a thousand years ago as capital of the Islamic Empire. As such a capital, Saamurra receives but scant reference in the history books, for after a little more than fifty years the seat of Government was transferred back to Baghdad, and not much has been heard of Saamurra since, but today the town is assuming new importance as the location of one of the world's greatest flood relief schemes.

A large part of the project is, in fact, sited across the river from the town, within sight of the golden dome of Saamurra's famous mosque and unique ninth century Muslim tower where — in complete contrast to the quiet serenity of the town — the air reverberates with the noise of pile-drivers, concrete-mixers and other modern machinery engaged on the construction of a vast barrage across the Tigris sixty miles upstream from Baghdad.

A little farther away, but still within sight of Saamurra, is the gaping mouth of a 42-mile-long escape channel through which flood waters, diverted by the barrage, will shortly flow to the Tharthar Depression — an immense pear-shaped hollow in the land enclosing something like 5,000 square miles of desert. The barrage and the channel, with its protective embankment, are the two main facets of the Wadi Tharthar scheme and each is being carried out by a different contractor.

By the end of last year, about three-quarters of the work on the channel and embankment and about one-quarter of the barrage had been completed. The reason the channel is so far ahead of the barrage is due largely to the severe setback suffered during last year's flooding of the Tigris; nevertheless, the contractors have undertaken to complete the contract in readiness for next year's spring floods, when the whole scheme is expected to go into operation. When that time comes, the river will be diverted from its present course by an earth dam to be built from both ends simultaneously across the Tigris when the level of the river drops in May. This dam will form a huge lake extending back many miles north of Saamurra.

### **A description of the barrage**

The object of the barrage — now under construction on dry ground opposite the town — is to raise the upstream level of the Tigris from about 190 ft. (its highest flood level at this point) to 210 ft., so that flood flows may be diverted to the Wadi Tharthar Depression, and water flowing downstream to Baghdad and beyond can be kept at a reasonable level. During the flood season, the barrage will enable more than half of the river displacement to be diverted. For the other nine months of the year, until electric generation begins, it will remain idle.



*The town of Saamurra, famous for the most imposing Abbasid monuments, has a peculiar round minaret of a mosque built by the Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakkil (d. 861 C.E.) known as al-Malwiyya the Mosque of the Round Minaret). In the background is visible the Golden Mosque*

Standing about 65 ft. high from its foundations, the barrage will be a 760 ft. long concrete structure with seventeen 36 ft. five-ton sluice gates operated by electric power. It will have a flow discharge capacity of 8,350 tons of water a second — although the normal discharge need not exceed half that amount if downstream requirements are to be adequately met. Its floor will be a mass of concrete, with baffle and deflector blocks, and a cut-off wall carried down to an impervious stratum. Piers will rise up from the concrete floor, and a series of reinforced concrete bridges will be built across them to carry a 20 ft. wide roadway, and two footpaths for traffic passing to and from Saamurra. This roadway will continue across the top of the earth dam thrown across the river's present course.

A similar embankment of compacted earth with a steel-pile cut-off, reaching down to impervious stratum, will join the barrage to a concrete regulator designed to control the discharge of flood waters, built up by the barrage, through the escape channel to the Tharthar Depression. At times of maximum flow, this regulator will be able to discharge up to 9,000 tons of water a second, a flow that is rarely ever expected to last for much longer than twenty-four hours. About twice as long as the barrage itself, the regulator will have thirty-six 36 ft. sluice gates bridged by two series of reinforced concrete bridges, one carrying the roadway and footpaths to Saamurra and the other the main Baghdad-Mosul railway line.

As the flood water discharged through the regulator would flow over the existing railway line and Saamurra station, part of the track will be raised on to the embankment and the railway station re-sited.

### **The regulator, embankments and a hydro-electric power station**

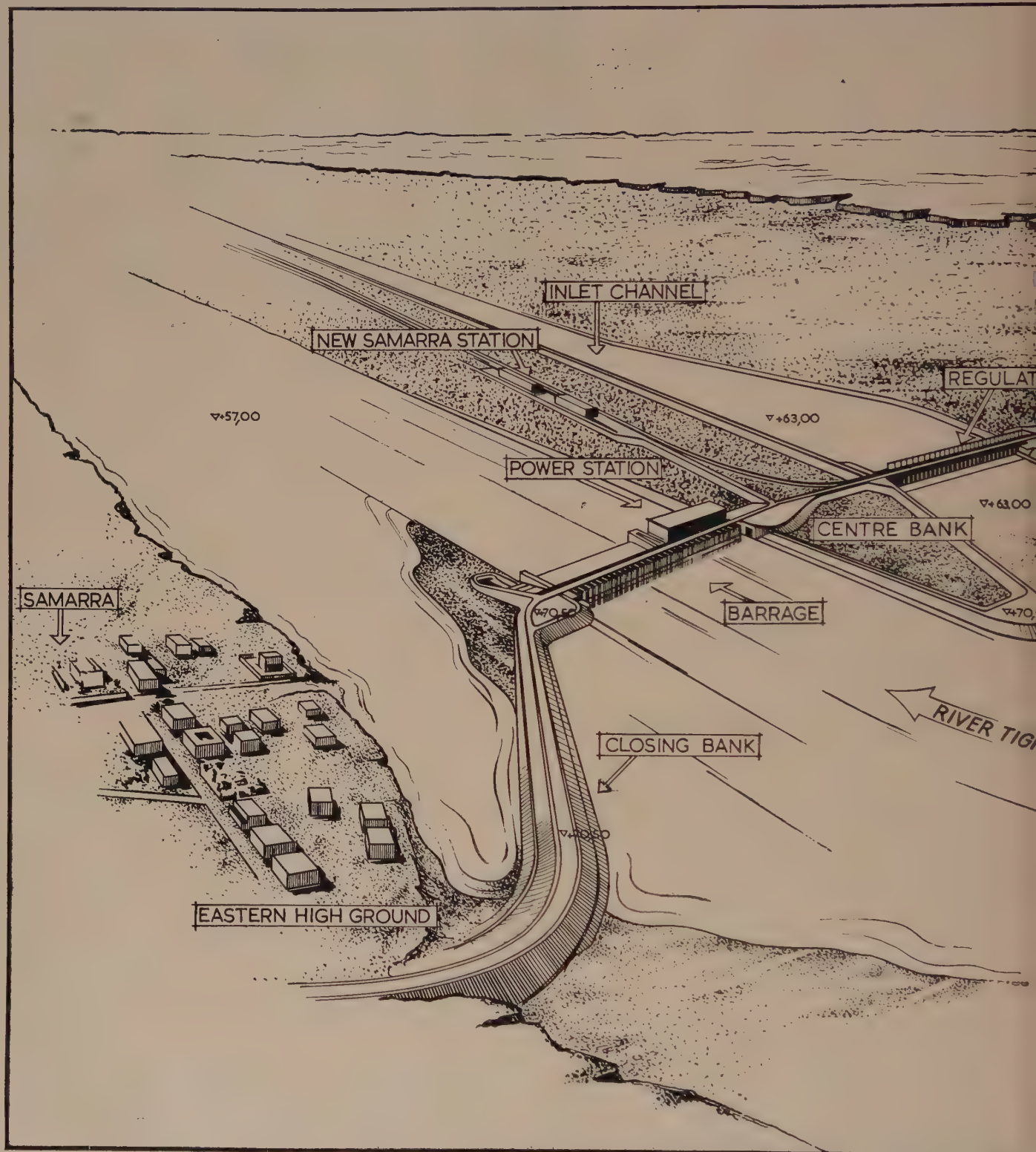
Apart from the barrage, regulator and embankments, a power station intake and a fish ladder are included in the construction contract. Together with the barrage, they will form a single unit capable of housing some of the biggest low-head turbines for generating electricity yet made. The intake will be necessary for the proposed construction, at a



later date, of a hydro-electric station comprising seven turbines of about sixteen megawatt capacity. Each will have a pair of 30-ft. sluice gates for generating electric power. Located between the barrage and the power station intake will be the fish ladder — a complicated structure in view

of the varying upstream and downstream levels of the river — through which fish will be able to pass, through a series of artificial pools, from one side of the river to the other.

To facilitate construction of the Saamurra barrage, the headworks of the Ishaqi Canal, later to become a source of

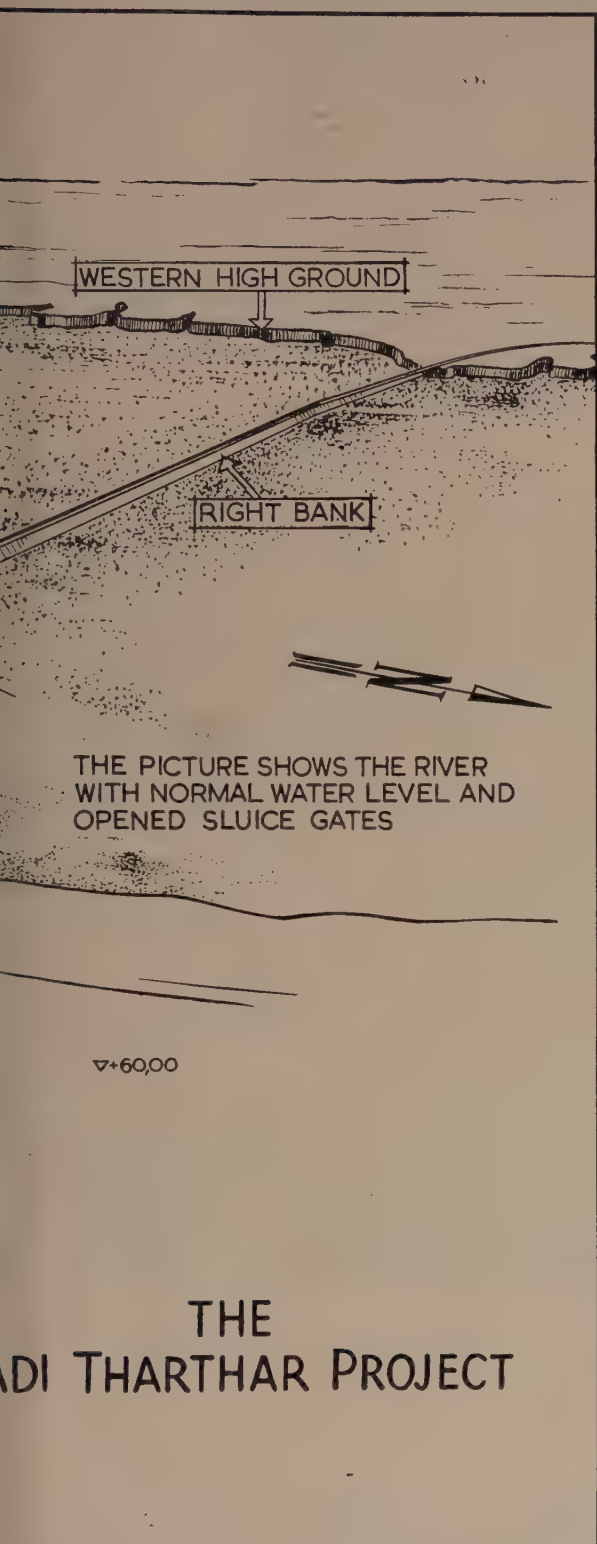


*A plan envisaging the completed scheme, prepared by the Iraq Development Board. The escape water channelled in the Wadi Tharthar Depression takes the right fork*



supply for a proposed irrigation scheme, are being embodied in the overall programme on which forty foreign technicians and 565 Iraqis are currently engaged.

Work on the escape channel, and the protective embankment which stretches for 42 miles from the regulator to the



Wadi Tharthar Depression, began early in 1952, and is expected to be completed by the end of this year. Over 100 foreign technicians and 1,500 Iraqis are working on them, and are accommodated in camps and houses built near the scene of operations. Offices, and a laboratory for analysing the soil most suitable for ensuring the impermeability of the embankment, have also been constructed.

### **The digging of the channel and the raising of the embankment the biggest excavation job going on anywhere in the world**

When the flood waters of the Tigris are discharged through the regulator in the spring, they will flow into a basin, nearly two miles wide, bordered on one side by an embankment of compacted earth, and by high ground on the other. This basin extends back to the entrance to the escape channel, and to the protective embankment which runs alongside it, to the southern tip of the Tharthar Depression. The embankment, which is being constructed with soil excavated from the channel, is designed to prevent the floodwaters from flowing southwards over cultivated areas towards Baghdad. There is no similar embankment on the other side of the channel — only desert over which anything in excess of the 500 tons of water per minute passing through the regulator can flow freely over a distance of four miles without harm or injury to anyone. For the first thirty miles, the land north of the channel is remarkably level and ideally suitable as an overflow area. But for the remaining distance, it becomes hilly — so that the channel has to be excavated more deeply to raise its capacity to 6,000 tons of water a second. The depth of the channel varies, therefore, from 15 ft. to 42 ft. along its 40-mile length. The spill area, over which the escaping water can spread for the first thirty miles, has a maximum capacity of about 600,000,000 tons.

The actual task of digging the channel, whose maximum width will be 360 ft., and raising the embankment with the excavated soil, is thought to be the biggest excavation job going on anywhere in the world. Altogether, by the end of this year, 50,000,000 tons of spoil will have been moved, representing about exactly half of what was involved in cutting the Suez Canal.

The embankment itself is being built up with loam, silt, sand, rock and gravel excavated from the channel — and from the desert on its open side when there is not sufficient in the ditch itself. Various types of scrapers are being used, the largest of which is capable of excavating twenty-three cubic yards of spoil a minute under favourable conditions. A number of motorized scrapers, of fourteen cubic yards capacity, lift the spoil into their bodies, and carry it to the top of the embankment where they drop it. Similar work is being carried out by elevating graders which cut the soil and transfer it on belts to trucks of thirty cubic yards capacity. Progress averages about half-a-mile every six weeks on each of the three sectors, but it varies according to the type of terrain covered.

The centre part of the embankment — it will be about 30 ft. wide at the top — is being specially constructed to form an impervious zone. For this, dry layers of loam are laid and sprinkled with water by 2,000-gallon water tankers, then flattened by 50-ton rollers. The loam sets like concrete to form the impervious zone which is about 30 ft. wide at the bottom and 9 ft. wide at the top. Although the spoil used in the construction of the embankment is largely gravel



and gypsum — not the easiest of materials to handle — there is the advantage that all the materials necessary for the work are on hand, including water. Some 300,000 gallons of water — obtained from ditches dug on the open side of the channel — are used each week in a single sector.

#### **An idea of the extensiveness of the Tharthar Valley**

Nobody knows the exact dimensions of the Wadi Tharthar Depression where the flood waters will evaporate during the heat of the summer months, but a rough estimate

that it could absorb *the whole flow of the Tigris for about four years* gives some idea of its immense capacity. Next year, at the time when, normally, anxiety and fear would be mounting in the hearts of the people of Iraq as the river rises, the object of their concern — the flood waters of the Tigris — should be swirling safely down the long man-made channel from Saamurra to Wadi Tharthar; and a menace that has for long threatened the whole economy of the country, and the lives and livelihood of the people, will at last have been brought firmly under control.



*A general view across the site of the Saamurra Barrage showing the town, with its Golden Mosque, in the distance. In the foreground are stacks of concrete blocks for the construction of piers*



# A CHARTER OF PROTECTION GRANTED TO THE NESTORIAN CHURCH IN 1138 C.E. BY MUKTAFI II, CALIPH OF BAGHDAD<sup>1</sup>

Translated and Edited by A. Mingana, D.D.

**"The charter emanates from the chancery of an 'Abbasid Caliph, but could an English King, a Dutch Queen or a French President write in the twentieth century a more tolerant charter in favour of their numerous Muslim subjects?"**

## Introductory note

We give in the following pages the translation of an official document of some importance. It is an original copy of a charter granted by the 'Abbasid' Caliph Muktafi II (1136-1160 C.E.) to the Nestorian Patriarch 'Abdisho' III (1138-1147 C.E.), and its wording settles a question that interests a large section of mankind.

The need has always been felt for an authoritative statement throwing light on the relations between official Islam and official Christianity at the time when Islam had power of life and death over millions of Christian subjects. Individual Christians may have suffered persecution at the hands of individual Muslims; isolated cases of Christian communities suffering hardship through the fanaticism of a provincial governor, or a jurist, or the hallucinations of a half-demented Sheikh or Mulla are also recorded in history; a Caliph or two, such as Mutawakkil, did, certainly, subject the Christians to some vexatious measures; but such incidents, however numerous, are to be considered as infractions of the law, and the men who brought them about were breakers of the law, as all criminals are breakers of the law.<sup>2</sup> The statutory attitude of Islam on this subject is laid down in clear terms in the present document, which proves beyond the possibility of doubt that, however imperfect official Islam may have been in some social aspects, statutory intolerance was not among its defects. The charter emanates from the chancery of an 'Abbasid Caliph, but could an English King, a Dutch Queen or a French President write in the twentieth century a more tolerant charter in favour of their numerous Muslim subjects? It is not the Qur'an that was the cause of some cases of persecution of Christians in early times, nor of their wholesale massacre in contemporary history, any more than the Gospel was the inspiring factor of the barbarities of the Inquisition. Politics, personal ambitions or economic expediency should not be confused with religion.

## A CHARTER OF PROTECTION TRANSLATION

(Copy of the Charter to the Catholicos, composed by my brother, may God have mercy upon his soul!)

*This is the Charter granted by our master and Sovereign, the Commander of the Faithful, to 'Abdisho, Catholicos and Patriarch*

Praise be to God whose bounty is universal and whose power is great, whose praise is obligatory and whose followers are victorious, whose attributes are perfect and whose justice is all embracing. He is known without an eye having ever perceived Him, He created the world spontaneously without revolving thoughts and cogitations in His

**The Charter of Protection granted to Christians is not an isolated example of tolerance of Muslims towards non-Muslims**

The charter was written in the twelfth century (more precisely in 1138 C.E.), but the Caliph who granted it states that he is following in the steps of the first four Caliphs after the Prophet, and copying the model of all the 'Abbasid Caliphs, his predecessors. The praiseworthy keynote of tolerance that runs through it is therefore that of all the Muslim Caliphs, and not of one of them only. This is best illustrated by the memorable sentence of the Nestorian Patriarch Isho' Yahb III (650-660 C.E.): "The Arabs to whom God has given at this time the government of the world . . . do not persecute the Christian religion; on the contrary they favour it, honour our priests and the saints of the Lord, and confer benefits on churches and monasteries."<sup>3</sup>

The charter also sheds great rays of light upon the procedure followed in the election of the Nestorian Patriarchs, the most important ecclesiastical dignitaries under Islamic domination.

The MS. of which we give a complete set of facsimiles is Arab. 694 of the John Ryland's Library. The text of the charter is preserved as a model of good Arabic composition in the anthology entitled *Tadhkirah* and compiled by Ibn Hamdun, who died in 1167 C.E. The author informs us that it was composed by his own brother, evidently the one called Abu Nasr, the Secretary of the Caliphs, who died in 1150 C.E.<sup>4</sup> Portions of this voluminous work are found in a more or less truncated form in some public libraries of Europe, the most complete being that preserved in the British Museum, and dated 1596 C.E.<sup>5</sup> The Rylands MS. seems to be the oldest in existence, as palaeographically it cannot be much later than 1200 C.E. It was thus written some forty years after the death of the author.

The charter is composed in rhymed prose and in a highly florid style. Our translation, although literal, is sometimes free and gives only the broad sense of the text.<sup>6</sup>

mind, and He comprehends the nature of all things, visible and invisible. He is high above the pictures that our imagination may form, and the subtle subjects that our mind may apprehend. He made the universe without previous pattern, and created all things without pre-existent plan. In favour of His oneness He set in order an imposing array of

*Continued on page 22*



As evidenced by the Charter of  
Protection granted to the  
Nestorian Church by the  
Caliph of Baghdad in 1138 C.E.

FACSIMILES OF THE SEVEN-PAGE  
ARABIC MS. OF THE CHARTER

(For Translation of the Arabic Text  
see pages 19 and 22)

عليه السلام المبرور عليه ما فيه من الهدى والبيان  
تصدىقه على من هو من المؤمنين على رسالة الهدى  
وذلك هو المبرور على الذي صرح به ولا يكون المبرور  
فصل في المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
سورة في المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
وصورة في المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
جاء في المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
البرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
مبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
والبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
بما اسوق المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
وهي من رعاية المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
سورة ولا يملك عونه ولا يملك عونه ولا يملك عونه  
من رتبة المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
فما هو المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
فمما هو المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
البرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور

والعنوان

البرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
والبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
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والمبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
فصل في المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
طوبى للمبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
ويظهر في المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
ومما هو المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
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البرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور

Page 6

Page 7

والبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
فما هو المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
البرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
والمبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
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طوبى للمبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
ويظهر في المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
ومما هو المبرور على المبرور على المبرور على المبرور  
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# ITS SISTER RELIGIONS

وذلك الذي من الموضع والموضع له في حقه وطبع  
اسم في حقه على انصر وروح امثاله والمسلم ان يحمله  
وان كان عبد الله لموسى معروم النسب والمثل والمظهر  
والعدا وان مثل كنهه اذا ورد عليك ورسول  
يصدره اليك عن امره والموسى اذا كان السيف في يده ويترك  
من لا يعمل لك في كل الامور عنه فاعلم ذلك واعلم به  
ان الله ولي حاسدين العاصين

Page 1

Page 2

من جانيه من افساخ في حرامه  
هو الكفار والمؤمنين من المؤمنين والمؤمنين  
لهم يسوع الخالق والظلم املهم والظلم  
لهم ايمانهم العظيم سلطانهم الواحد في الغالب  
جنتهم الكامل فضلهم التامل عدلهم المصروف  
بغير روية تدركه ولا يظلم الخلق من غير روية  
بما لا يظلمهم الا في الاشياء الظاهرة منها وما لم يظلم  
عن اليقين بعد الامور وقصور القليل الذي لا يتبع  
الحوادث على غير ما في الخلق المصروف في غير  
واسر الله ولا دليل وامام من شواهد الشرائع

وحيات

وبعد انيته ومجرات السمايين على عجايب حكمة  
ما اعلنت هذه العقول والصابرين وشهيد القلوب العارفة  
والصابرين انهم لم يخذلوا حجة ولا ولا يشارك في ملك  
احدا ولا ولا يترك من اولاد ولا يترك من حردوا سبحان  
وتعالى عما يشرك الظالمون والظالمين والحمد لله الذي  
اختار محمد امين من العرب مصابا وكرمها امنا  
وما بعد الله من الظالمين والظالمين والظالمين  
والظالمين والظالمين والظالمين والظالمين  
في حقهم العبد في حقهم العبد في حقهم العبد  
من السبل وقصور من الجلال واستمر من السبل  
الذليل فلم يزل الامر به ملبعا ومجهدا في الجاهل النجدة  
للامنة مستغوا حتى طمس معالم الباطل ودفع عن وغر  
الضلال الى المايل والحق الاسلام من روعة عارته  
منقذته في الافاق وموتته التصور المين  
كلمته واخر الله تعالى موعده واعلا منه على  
الذين كذبوا واطاوه واجروا في اساعده وانصاره ونسخ  
الميل المسافة منته الى حرمها الايمان وانك

جاءت بسوط الحلفاء المتعارفة عندهم باذنها منته ودا  
لك غفوة الكاملة وصفاها وحصد طاعة من التصار  
الذين يصنع لهم في الاستسلام بسوق امثالك واستطاع  
ابناء مضاربك واسكالك وذكروا انهم يظلموا احوالك  
دور الالهات فيهم واسمعتوا ايام منيها وخافهم حكي  
مسار طاعتهم التي جالت في طرقاتهم وهم وراعي  
مطلع حرمهم فانقطعوا لغيرهم من الالهات من قلوبهم  
وامواهم على عبادك للرباسد عبادهم وراعيهم  
وتدبر وفهمهم والنسوة في عمل الوساطة بين فحهم  
ومعهمهم وناووا مصاصهم عليك الاذن الذي يفسر  
قواعدهم وتصدف موانعهم وتسلم مانيه وتغوت اجبه  
فانهم اسماهم فيما سألوه الاجاب والجافهم في الظلمه  
كجناح الاطراب وبور الاذن الايمان في الشرائع والشر  
او امدهم في التوفيق معصونه بسوبك خالدا في السطوة  
النصارى من دين السلام ومن يفسرهم من دين الاسلام  
وزعمهم من دينهم من الزعم واليقافيه والملايكه  
في جمع البلا والكل خاضع من هذه الطوائف وباد

والنصارى

في العلون على الدعا لايه وليسطر اما الهات بعد الاعتقاد  
واحد من ايرها وهو يسوع المسيح الذي انكر منه  
النسبة وتصورك في الحديث بها خطا منها وقسمه وما  
توفيقه الا بالله عليه تتوكل واليه يدين وان اميد  
المؤمنين في حقه الله اليه من امر عاره في حقه اغنية  
فانضه وبلاد رعي الامم من اهتمامه عناية طي  
وتولاه في عامة منصفاته انا حارسه شاملة وحفظا  
منقذ احوالها في صفاتها احوالها ويصل حالها  
ويجس قسرها ويكف مكرادها ويجمع بركهم عموما  
يشرك فيه المسلمين بها والمعاملة والرائي والمسلمين  
وطوائف الملوك اهل الكبار الذين حفرهم في الشرع  
وقصد وكشفهم في طرقة وحاشه لي في عليهم في الحسنة  
باجهم ونفسهم في طرقة النظر فيهم فيهم ويا  
الف حالك الحاف للمؤمنين وانك اسك اهل حالك  
طريقة وافهمهم الى الصانع مدها وحليفه واحفاهم  
لللال التي اجتمعوا على شريكهم وانهم ادرك  
استحقاقك للاسما من نعم باموك ومفادك وفدك

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cogent proofs, and in favour of His transcendent wisdom He produced wonderful testimonies which strike our inner mind and intelligence, our perceiving heart and discerning conscience, and compel us to proclaim that He has no consort and no son, and that He is not in partnership with anyone through whom He may be circumscribed or conceived to have an offspring. The Most High is far above what is attributed to Him by the ignorant.

Praise also be to God who chose Muhammad from the most honourable Arabian stock, and distinguished father and mother; who sent him with irrefragable proof, resplendent truth, and clear evidence, at a time when mankind was immersed in the ignorance of aberrations and straying from the right direction, and at a time when there was an interruption in the ministry of apostleship and the bewildered religious sects were on the increase and fast clinging to their errors. The word of God prospered through him; he emptied it in the reservoirs of truth of the Arab nation, until the waymarks of falsehood were submerged and the crookedness of those who procrastinated in the matter of their conversion was obliterated. The roots of Islam spread then to all directions and its divine mission was established through a victory the upshot of which is known to all. The Most High God fulfilled then His promise by making His religion prevail over every other religion, by consolidating its triumph, by strengthening its followers and adherents, and by abrogating all the preceding religions, which thus came to an end through his religion.

In confirmation of His promise the Most High revealed also to him the Book with all the guidance and testimonies of truth that it contains for the followers of His religion. *It is He who has sent His Apostle with guidance and true religion to make it prevail over every other religion, however averse the polytheists may be* (The Qur'an, 9:33). God blessed him, therefore, and his family and his companions, with a blessing that enhances his prestige and is in keeping with his dignity and his merits, as long as evening follows morning and calamities are removed by the hidden grace of God.

Praise also be to God who invested the Commander of the Faithful with the glory of the Caliphate — the inheritance of his fathers — and clothed him with its robe: the best of all favours; who made him take possession of the high office before which faces fall down in awe and on account of which the honours of religion and State are offered to him; who caused the stars of justice to shine in the firmament without setting, under his administration, and gave a vigorous impulse to commercial undertakings so that their marketable commodities should suffer no restriction and no diminution to buyers.

By his prudent government he has defended the inviolable land of the faith so that its flocks should be under no fear, and the purity of its water should suffer no pollution, that the sharp edge of the sword of the faith should bear no notch and its adherents should not be smitten by any calamity. He has further been gracious to single out his subjects for a gift which warded off all harm from them, straightened their spear after it had twisted, brought together the scattered remnants of their prosperity, and nurtured the causes of their progress. They are surrounded by the arm of his justice, pleased that by his favours they have shaken off unhappiness and entered into the path of comfort and ease. In their abundance they have firmly set their heart to obey him and pray for his ancestors; they have raised their expectations after the restrictions imposed upon them, and have crushed those of their enemies who had assailed them. He, on his part, only asks God to inspire his subjects with

gratitude for this gift, and his constant mention of it is a sign that he esteems very highly his share in it; his success is exclusively through God: in Him he has placed his confidence and to Him he will eventually return.

Because God has placed in the hands of the Commander of the Faithful the management of the affairs of His servants, and laid on him the burden of His land and His countries, he governs his subjects with vigilant eyes, watches over their welfare with great care, and works for their prosperity with a solicitude which removes all their anxiety, joins all their hopes together, fills their pastures with grass, and fulfils all their eager desires. In this solicitude participate not only Muslims but also those with whom he is on terms of alliance whether they be near or far, and those of his different subjects from the *People of the Book* who stand within the limits of the terms of the "pact of protection" guaranteed by the convention of the *Shar'*, concerning the *Dhimmah*. The shadow of his kindness extends to them all, and to it their eyes and their ears bear witness.

I brought thy petition to the notice of the Commander of the Faithful and informed him that thou wast the worthiest of thy people in devotion and the nearest of them all to goodness in saintliness and other accomplishments, and that thou wast possessed of qualities and merits which singled thee out from all of them, and that thou hadst contained in thee all the prerequisites, provisions and qualifications of the Catholicate, known to thy people. With me there was a deputation of Christians well versed in the regulations affecting this high office, and they submitted that after a careful and searching examination of thy claim they had come to the conclusion that they were in need of a Catholicos to look after their affairs and minister to their collective needs, and that by a spontaneous and unanimous decision they had acquiesced in thy elevation to the headship of their religion for regulating their affairs, satisfying their needs, and rendering justice to the strongest and the weakest among them. They asked for the confirmation of thy election in form of a charter which would place it on solid basis and unassailable foundations.

The Commander of the Faithful ordered, therefore, that their request be granted and their wish be gratified. The Charter of the highest *imamate* of Islam — may its orders be always crowned with success — is hereby granted thee to be the Catholicos of the Nestorian Christians inhabiting the "City of Peace" and all the lands of the countries of Islam; thou art empowered to act as their head and the head also of those Greeks, Jacobites and Melchites, whether represented here or not, who might oppose them in any country; thou art singled out from all thy co-religionists to wear the brown insignia of the Catholicate in your Churches and meeting houses of your devotions, without any Archbishop, or Bishop, or Deacon, having right to wear them or share them with thee: they are a mark of their dependence on the dignity and the high office to which thou hast been promoted. If any of the above-mentioned clerics enters through the door of contention with thee and recalcitrance against thee, or treads in the path of revolt against thy orders, or refuses to accept thy decisions, or disturbs thy peace, he will be prosecuted and punished for his conduct, until he retraces his steps and his obstinacy is broken, in order that others may be deterred from adopting a similar course and the enactments of your Canons may be preserved in their entirety.

Following the precedent sanctioned by the Imams, his predecessors, in their dealings with the Catholics, thy predecessors, the Commander of the Faithful does also hereby bestow upon thee and upon thy followers the statutory



prerogatives: thy life and property and those of thy people will be protected; great care will be taken in the promotion of your welfare; your ways of interring your dead will be respected, and your churches and monasteries will be protected. In all this we are in conformity with the method adopted by the Orthodox Caliphs with your predecessors, a method that has been followed by the high Imams, my predecessors — may God be pleased with them — in their interpretation of the terms of our Convention with you: that we shall be satisfied with you by your payment of the capitation tax, levied upon the males of your community who have passed the age of minority, and who are rational and solvent; that all your females and your males in their minority shall be exempted from it; and that it shall be levied once a year in strict conformity with the kindly rules of the *Shar'*.

The Commander of the Faithful was also gracious to be willing to mediate between the different Christian communities in their lawsuits in order to exact justice from the strong in favour of the weak, and to direct to the right path anyone who was straying from it; to look after them according to the requirements of their religion, and to follow it in its clear path and straight course.

Be thou worthy of all these favours granted to thee, which fulfil the desires of thy soul, and set up prayers and invocations for the Commander of the Faithful as a token of thy gratitude and a sign of thy allegiance. It is also the duty of all the Archbishops, Priests and Bishops of the above-mentioned denominations to show submission in this way to the Commander of the Faithful, and to meet his kindness with subordination and obedience.

1 Reproduced by kind permission of the Librarian, *The Bulletin of the John Ryland's Library*, Manchester, Vol. 10, No. 1, for January 1926.

2 See, however, T. W. Arnold in Hasting's *Encyclopaedia of Religion*, 1921, Vol. 12, pp. 365-369.

3 Assemani, *Bib. Orient*, Vol. 3, p. 121.

4 See Ibn Khallikan's *Wafayat* (life 665; Vol. 7, pp. 66-67, edit. Wüstenfeld); *Kamil*, Vol. 6, p. 217; *Haj. Khalifa*, Vol. 2, p. 253.

5 See Rieu's *Supplement to the Catalogue of the Arabic MSS. in the British Museum*, Nos. 1137-1138, pp. 715-718.

6 *Shar'* is the sacred law of Islam, and *Dhimma* refers to the "covenant of Protection" through which the *People of the Book* were allowed to live in peace in a Muslim country, and even protected, by their payment of the capitation tax.

# THE FIRST ARABIAN NAVAL ACADEMY<sup>1</sup>

By G. Kheirallah

In 1608, the Andalusian Moors, driven by the edicts and persecution of Philip III of Spain, settled in Salé and Rabat on the Atlantic coast of Morocco and established an independent Republic, the first in the then Arab world.

Morocco then was in a disorganized state. Portugal had occupied old Afna, present-day Casablanca, and Spain al-'Arish. Their depredations along the coast made the Sultan welcome the Arabs from Spain and grant them autonomy. Under the leadership of al-Mujahid al-'Aiyashi, the Republic flourished as the centre of import and export until 1666, when it rejoined the Sultanate. However, its reputation rests on the establishment of a naval school to teach piloting, and the organization of the Corsair flotilla which spread the fame of the "Sally Rovers". Piracy was then encouraged by all governments, and the pirate ships were counted upon as the best warships of any country. Many adventurers came from Europe to Africa to join the "Sally Rovers".

Once, a Scotsman commanded a Sally pirate ship, and Captain John Smith of England, later of Virginia, came to Salé and as far as Marakush, seeking service and adventure.

Robinson Crusoe, in the story of his adventures, fell into their hands and made his escape three years later. Cervantes, the author of *Don Quixote*, spent many years as a prisoner to their brother pirates of Algeria.

It is interesting to note that in the strategically located and beautifully constructed naval academy of Rabat, with its high lookout tower commanding a distant view of the Atlantic Ocean, we have one of the earliest instances of an organized naval academy. The Arabs succeeded the Phoenicians as pioneers of navigation, and for a number of centuries were the leaders in this field. Those of southern Arabia and the Persian Gulf had carried the trade of the Egyptians to the land of Punt. They had sailed the Indian Ocean and the China Sea, and had developed a commerce with India which attracted to Arabia the predatory eyes of

Rome. The Arabian Muslims had written of the tides, waves and typhoons from a scientific standpoint, and Arabian geographers were the first to set down descriptions of estuaries, harbours, waterways and sea coasts.

It was the Muslim Arabs who subsequently introduced nautical astronomy and the use of the astrolabe and magnetic compass. It is said that the Chinese had first knowledge of the magnetic needle, but that the Arabs were the first to enclose it in a box and employ it in navigation of both sea and desert. Chu Yu, the first among the Chinese to mention it, wrote after 1120 C.E. that it was introduced by foreign mariners. Shahab-al-Din Ibn Majid, in 1489 wrote his classic "*Kitabul-Fawa'id bi Usul fi 'Ilm al-Bahr wal-Qawa'id*" — the Book of Attainment in the Principles of Nautical Science and Rules.

Suleyman Ibn Ahmad al-Mahri wrote (1511) "*al-Imdah al-Mahriyah fi Dabt al-'Ulum al-Bahriyya*" — the Mahri Guide in the Precision of Nautical Science.

Vasco Da Gama secured and relied upon Qutb al-Din al-Nuhrawali (1498) to guide and navigate the Portuguese squadron from Malindi to the Indies. The Portuguese records state that these Arabs had good sea-maps and marine instruments (compass and quadrant). The Muslim Arab sailors and sea-faring merchants went as far as Finland, Norway, Sweden, Iceland and the Volga region, and it is due to these same early sailors and merchants that we find Islam entrenched and flourishing today in Java, India, the Malay Islands, China and the Philippines. The Arabs bequeathed to the English language such nautical terms as: admiral, azimuth, zenith, nadir, cable, sloop, kayuk, barque, reef, monsoon, typhoon, arsenal, magazine, bridge, deck, canvas and yacht.

1 Courtesy, the Editor, *The Arab World*, New York, U.S.A., Vol. 1, No. 4, 1945.



# AL-GHAZALI'S *KIMIYA'E SA'ADAT*

or

## THE ALCHEMY OF HAPPINESS

By A. A. Hydari, M.A.

### *Kimiya'e Sa'adat* is Ghazali's greatest work in Persian

Among numerous books attributed to Ghazali (d. 1111 C.E.) only four or five of them are written in Persian, his mother tongue. The two most important are the *Kimiya'e Sa'adat* (The Alchemy of Happiness) and *Nasihāt al-Muluk* (The Advice to Kings). In the latter work Ghazali addresses the rulers of Islam and urges them to justice and chastity. *Nasihāt al-Muluk*, though dedicated to Sultan Muhammad of the Seljuk Dynasty (d. 1117 C.E.), his name does not come in the text, for Ghazali addresses the *Muluk* or sultans of Islam in general and not a specific king. The other two are *Khulasat al-Tasanif* (The Summary of Compositions) and *Yawaqit al-'Ulum* (The Rubies of Sciences), of which little is known.<sup>1</sup> Apart from those four books, there are many Persian letters written by Ghazali to different rulers, statesmen and theologians of his time. A collection of these letters under the title of *Fadha'il al-Anam*<sup>2</sup> (The Virtues of Mankind) has been edited by an ancient scholar whose name and date unfortunately are unknown.

The *Kimiya'e Sa'adat* is Ghazali's greatest work in Persian, and as a book of human conduct it has no equal in Persian literature. It took only a year (1106 C.E.)<sup>3</sup> for Ghazali to finish this bulky work, which is almost 1,000 pages in length. It was written after the *Ihya'* and before *al-Munqidh*. The *Kimiya'e Sa'adat* is an abridgement of Ghazali's masterpiece *Ihya'*. Ghazali translated his own Arabic work into Persian apparently at the request of the common people, as he says: "I explain this for Persian-speaking people and withdraw my pen from long-winded, deep and difficult paragraphs, so that the understanding of ordinary men should grasp its meaning. But if anybody desires more accurate research beyond this, he should consult the Arabic works such as *Ihya'* and *Jawahir al-Qur'an* (The Pearls of the Qur'an) and others, which I wrote in Arabic. This book is meant to be for the common people who asked me to write it in Persian and the language should not go beyond their understanding". In his short preface to the *Kimiya'e Sa'adat*, Ghazali explains why he calls his book by this name. He says, as alchemy turns copper and brass into pure gold, similarly this alchemy purifies human beings from baseness, and lifts them up to the nobility of angels which leads them to everlasting joy.

### The subject matter of *Kimiya'e Sa'adat*

The *Kimiya'e Sa'adat's* division into fundamentals, principles and chapters is more or less like *Ihya'*. Ghazali divides his book into four headings, four fundamentals and forty principles, that is to say, each fundamental consists of ten principles. The whole book is divided into four parts, each part named *Rokn* or fundamental:

- (1) Of worship (*'Ibadat*),
- (2) Of conduct (*Mu'aamalat*),
- (3) Of deadly vices (*Muhlikat*); and
- (4) Of deliverers (*Munjiyat*).

The four headings are:

- (1) One should know one's real self;
- (2) One should know God;
- (3) One should know the reality of this world; and
- (4) One should know the reality of the world to come.

Ghazali, before dealing with the four fundamentals, deals with these four headings, which are, as it were, an introduction to his book. According to Ghazali these four kinds of knowledge are, in fact, the cardinal points of Islam. Then he deals with the four headings, which vary from five to eighteen chapters.

Ghazali claims that the key to the knowledge of God is the knowledge of one's own soul. He insists that one cannot realize God unless one knows oneself first. He compares the human soul to a mirror, and says he who looks into this mirror sees God.

Ghazali prefers to call the soul the heart, and explains that by heart he does not mean the physical heart which is in the left side of the chest. This heart is visible, and that heart which is called "soul" also, is invisible.

In this heart lies the knowledge of God — it is not form nor substance, it does not belong to this world; it is from the same essence as angels. About the nature of the soul, or heart, Ghazali does not go further than this. His own word is *Ruh*. As for the reality of the soul, in what it consists, and what is its special qualities, the *Shari'ah* does not permit this to be revealed; that is why the Prophet did not explain it; as God says in the Qur'an, "And they will ask about the soul; say that it is the creation of God". Then Ghazali adds that the function of the heart is the search for everlasting happiness, and this happiness and peace depend upon the knowledge of God.

### Ghazali on the necessity of the body for the soul

Human beings are composed of two opposite natures, soul and body. The body is the abode of the soul. This body consists of dust, heat and moisture; that is why it is weak and in danger of destruction, whereas the soul, being immaterial, is immortal. The position of the body to the heart is similar to the position of the camel to its driver. Therefore, the body is necessary to the soul. Ghazali does not ignore the importance of the body; to him, the body, though not more than a vehicle, demands care, but not too much. The relationship of the body to the heart, he says, is like that of a pilgrim to his camel, on the way to the pilgrimage. In this case, the camel is meant to be for the pilgrim, and not the pilgrim for the camel. Though the pilgrim, out of necessity, must look after the camel, feeding, watering and covering it, he should do so in moderation, and not more than is necessary. Then if a pilgrim spends all his time in looking after the camel, which after all is not more than a means of taking the pilgrim to the Ka'bah, he will be left behind the caravan, and will never reach his goal.

Then Ghazali goes on to say: "The body in this world needs three things, food, clothing and dwelling, and these three necessities, the simpler the better; whereas the food of the heart is knowledge, and of this the more the better. On the other hand, God has bestowed upon human beings the desire (*shahwah*), and the characteristic of this desire is such that it does not stand still, but increases. At the same time, God has created wisdom (*'aql*), in order to control the

1 *Al-Ghazali*, Vol. 2, edited by A. F. Rafa'i.

2 *Ghazali-Nameh*, Huma'i.

3 *Ibid*.



desire, and lastly, God has sent the *Shari'ah* through prophets to determine its limits."

### **Ghazali's view of this world**

Ghazali takes this world as a shadow which appears motionless, but in fact it constantly moves, and takes away our lives. He likens this world to an old woman, adorned with fine costumes and veiled in brocade, who fascinates from a distance, but on closer viewing, her ugliness becomes evident, and those who are charmed by her realize their follies. Then he deals with the shortness of life in this manner: "Take a pen and dictate for yourself; you will see that it has been a long time from the eternity from which you sprang that you have not existed, and it will be many years until the end of the world that you will not exist. Now, consider the briefness of this life between those two infinities, and admit that this earthly life is not more than a passage-way whose first dwelling is the cradle and the next the grave. On the way there are a few stops; each year is a day's journey, each month an hour, each day a minute, and each breath but a moment." By emphasis on the shortness of life, Ghazali does not mean to say that now that life is short let us be merry and carefree; on the contrary, he insists that not a single moment of it should be wasted. Ghazali's own life is a practical example of a well-spent and profitable life.

### **An interesting parable by Ghazali**

Ghazali, while dealing with worldly men who busy themselves all the time with affairs of the world and neglect future life, gives an interesting parable. He likens them to a crew who are on a boat and get to an island in order to retire, and the boatman shouts that nobody should be late for the boat leaves soon. The crew scatter on the island; those who are wise immediately after washing themselves return, find the boat empty and occupy comfortable chairs; some of the members of the crew who were attracted by the wonders of the place stay to watch for a while, and when they get back to the boat cannot find room to sit and have to stand; the third group are not satisfied with a mere visit, take precious stones as well as perishable goods, and have to suffer these burdens in the boat; and the last group are so lost in the beauty of the island that they miss the boat altogether and die or get killed by beasts on the island. The first few are pious men and the last unbelievers who forget both themselves and God, and the two groups in between are rebels who believe, but are nevertheless attached to this world.

Thus Ghazali attempts to illustrate in the simplest way the answers to the puzzling questions which arise in the minds of ordinary men. Ghazali, however, in order to prevent misrepresentation, adds that one should not think he means that everything about this world is mean or indecent; on the contrary, there are noble objects in this life, and it is only in this world where one can make preparations for the future life. Knowledge and practice (*'ilm wa 'aml*), which one should obtain in this world, are the riches that would benefit in the world to come. The means of life such as food, clothing, dwelling and marriage, provided they be just for the fulfilment of needs, are essential to keep one proceeding on the journey of life. "Whatever is essentially needed is not considered as worldly interests."

### **Ghazali on death and future life**

Ghazali believes that a man has two souls: animal soul and human soul. The animal soul, being of the same nature as the soul of animals, dies with the body, but the human soul survives. The animal soul is a horse, and the human soul its rider. The death of the horse does not lead to the

death of the horseman; he merely loses his horse. According to Ghazali the fundamentals of religion are two: belief in God and in the future life. Here Ghazali hints at a secret which according to him is the key to all secrets, but he does not reveal it, and says: "All knowledge about God and the future life depends on this great secret; make an effort to come to know it through experience, for if you are told what it is, you cannot bear to hear it. There have been many people who have been told this secret and have denied it by saying that it is impossible". Meanwhile Ghazali adds that this secret about a special attribute of God has not been mentioned in the Qur'an nor in the Hadith; that is why when people hear it they cannot believe it. This sacred secret, according to Ghazali's belief, should always remain so, because the prophets are asked to speak to the people according to their understanding.

Thus Ghazali, having established the reality of the future life, deals with the meaning of the punishment of the grave. At one's death, when all senses cease to function, he says that all the objects which have been felt during the lifetime through the senses vanish. Now, if these things are beloved, when they are taken away, the lover will suffer greatly, and this is the meaning of the punishment of the grave. On the other hand, if the dead person has no beloved but God, by his death he reaches his beloved and finds comfort. Therefore, the grave can be either one of the dungeons of Hell or one of the gardens of Paradise. Ghazali, however, claims that the punishment of the grave varies according to the degree of the dead man's attachment to this world. Then he refers to the popular superstition that there are snakes and dragons in the grave eating the body, and he explains that these dragons are the undefeated vices of the man which have been hidden in his soul while he was alive, and now they have appeared in full manifestation. To Ghazali these inner snakes are far more horrible than the popular belief imagines.

Ghazali is not opposed to the desire for worldly properties; but his point is that they should be overshadowed by the love of God, otherwise there is no harm in one's taking care of one's belongings; and it is natural for one to like one's own family, providing it does not supersede the love of God; as for those people who do not love God at all, they will have to suffer, and one of the reasons for everlasting punishment for unbelievers is based on this. Ghazali in the meantime points out that by the love of God he does not mean mere lip service, which is the popular means of expressing one's devotion. There is a test for true love, and that is, if one desires something which divine law prevents one from having, one obeys divine law, and thus proves that one's love for God is genuine.

### **Ghazali's Hell is spiritual**

Ghazali's Hell is spiritual, and in it there exist three kinds of fires: (a) the fire of separation from worldly desires; (b) the fire of disgrace and shame; and (c) the fire of being deprived of the vision of God.

Here too, as Ghazali maintained before, he insists that the inner fire is more burning than actual fire. The literary Hell with all its flames and brimstone is nothing in comparison with the fire and smoke which consumes the human soul. But to the ordinary people, Ghazali adds that the predestined Hell is more horrifying. Like a child when it is told by its teacher that it must learn its lessons, it is for its own benefit; the child does not understand this, so the teacher must threaten it with punishment in order to make it do its work. This is the way the *Shari'ah* has inserted Hell and Paradise as material realities.

Ghazali tries, however, to convince those people who



doubt or deny the future life, and those who take it as a warning or a fancy Hell and Paradise. He says: "Supposing all 124,000 prophets with all the saints, theologians and wise men had been wrong or mistaken, why do you not consider for a moment that you may be wrong. This is a possibility with grave danger and long suffering behind it, and a wise man never takes such a great risk." Then he quotes a saying of 'Ali (d. 661 C.E.), who while reasoning with a pagan says, "If it be what you say both of us are the same, but if it be as we say, woe to you".

Of course 'Ali had no doubt about what he believed, but since to talk with absolute certainty to a pagan was futile, he had to employ this manner of speech.

## The Four Parts of the *Kimiya'e Sa'adat*

### The first principle of worship: faith

To become a Muslim, one should, after having uttered "There is no god but God and Muhammad is His Prophet", know its meaning in his heart, and believe in it in such a way that no doubt would remain about it. When this is done, one is a Muslim.

### Prayer

The intense importance which Ghazali as a mystic gives to the daily prayer is significant. To him prayer is the pillar of Islam, the foundation of religion, the forerunner of all worship, and the key to Paradise.

Prayer, like other religious practices, for Ghazali has two sides, which he puts as a body and spirit; body being the form of prayer and spirit its inner purpose, the latter almost the whole thing, for a body without a soul is nothing but a corpse.

The very spirit of prayer to Ghazali is humility and presence of the whole heart towards the Almighty. To him a prayer without humility is not a valid prayer. Meanwhile Ghazali, after referring to the conditions of prayer, such as ablution, covering of the body, facing Mecca, and prostration, explains the real meaning of each action. The spirit of ablution is purification of the heart by repentance. The covering of the body, apparently, is in order not to be naked in the eyes of the people, but in reality means to cover one's inner nakedness by the veil of bashfulness — not as an attempt to hide one's sins, for the eyes of God see everything, but to feel broken-hearted and askance like a fugitive slave who comes back to his master and cannot lift up his head because of the disgrace. Facing Mecca signifies that one should turn away his face from all other directions but the Ka'bah, similarly one should turn away the interest of one's heart from everything in this world and the next, and concentrate on God alone. Since the apparent *Qiblah* (the direction which the Muslim devotee faces while at prayer) is one, the *Qiblah* of the heart is one too, and that is God. And as turning the face from Mecca breaks the form of prayer, to turn the intention of the heart from God breaks the spirit of prayer and makes it null and void.

Prostration outwardly is a bodily courtesy, but inwardly is the humiliation of the heart. He who puts his forehead, the noblest part of his body, on the earth, the lowest of all things, reminds himself that he springs from dust and will return to it. This makes one humble and one realizes one's nothingness confronting the Creator.

After prayer he deals with the three other principles of Islam, namely, alms-giving, fasting and pilgrimage, in detail, and especially points out their real significance and the idea behind them.

### The second principle of conduct

In the following chapters, which are about human con-

duct, Ghazali not only discusses the rites of trade and commerce based on the *Shari'ah* and the laws of marriage, but he almost touches all aspects of human behaviour. He devotes pages to the topics of social relations — the rights of neighbours, the upbringing of children, travel, retirement, song and music, how to rule, or even how to drink and eat. Ghazali's approach to and treatment of his subject is pleasing. He does not say rigidly what to do and what not to do; rather he prefers to count advantages and disadvantages of a certain problem and leaves the rest to the reader to choose for himself. For instance, in the case of marriage, Ghazali has five arguments for it and three against it; likewise he enumerates six reasons for and six against seclusion and retirement.

### Music

Ghazali's comment on music and song is worthy of consideration. He believes that those '*Ulama* who have made *Sama'* (listening to music) unlawful have been superficial. Ghazali, unlike others, considers *Sama'* permissible, and says, "A secret is bestowed from God to human heart which is hidden as is fire in iron. And as when stone touches iron it produces fire, likewise music and good song move that hidden essence of the human soul without his being conscious of it. The reason for this being that there is a relation between the essence of the human soul and the celestial world. The heavenly world is the world of beauty and goodness and the origin of beauty is harmony; therefore, anything which is harmonious is a manifestation of that world; thus melody and pleasing song has something in common with the wonders of the celestial world, and that is why it pleases the human heart". Music and song, Ghazali adds, do not create a new thing in the heart but move what is already there. Since it is so, "whoever has a religious feeling in his heart whose strength is demanded, by listening to music, he will be rewarded, because it heightens his feeling. But he who has a wicked heart and whose irreligious passions are excited by music will be punished. And whoever's heart be void of both, but listens to music for the fun of it and its pleasure, it is permissible for him to do so".

The last chapter of the second fundamental principle deals with the duties of a ruler. According to Ghazali, to be a ruler is a great task. If it be in the way of justice the ruler is vicegerent to God on earth; otherwise it is vicegerent of the Devil. Nothing in the world, in Ghazali's belief, is a greater cause of deterioration than cruelty as a ruler. As the Prophet has said: "A kingdom may last with unbelief, but it will not last with injustice". And lastly, Ghazali adds, no worship, or the way to approach God, is greater than ruling with justice.

### The third principle — of deadly vices

The third fundamental of the *Kimiya'e Sa'adat*, which is called "the deadly vices", consists of ten parts, and each part deals with a certain vice, such as ill-temper, anger, lust, love of money, pride, hypocrisy, etc. Ghazali takes each of these inner diseases, analyses them, and shows how they can be fought, ultimately to be cured.

Ghazali treats hypocrisy more harshly than any other human vice. To him hypocrisy is one of the mortal sins and is almost polytheism, since a hypocrite by his outward piety in fact worships men and not God. In this way a pretender associates creatures with the Creator, and he is nothing but a polytheist. On the other hand, Ghazali takes those people who do good deeds in secrecy to Heaven. There is nothing in the world, he says, mightier or more virtuous than he who gives alms with the right hand without his left hand being aware of it. Ghazali quotes the Caliph 'Omar (d. 644 C.E.), who saw a man with bended head pretending that he was a



pious person, and told him, "Lift up your head; humiliation is in the heart and not in the neck".

#### The fourth principle — of deliverers

The fourth and last of the *Kimiya'e Sa'adat* is named "deliverers". This fundamental, like the other three, is divided into ten chapters, concerning repentance, patience, fear and hope, poverty and piety, meditation, love, etc., among which chapters three and nine, about hope and love, are especially significant.

Ghazali believes that the worship of God in the hope of His blessing and forgiveness is better than to worship Him out of fear of His punishment, because the fruit of hope is love and the consequence of fear is hatred. "As the Prophet has said, 'God forbids that one does die without having good in God'."

#### Love

As for love, Ghazali insists that there is nothing beyond or higher than this. He disputes the opinion of some theologians who say that the meaning of love of God is obedience to Him and nothing more. Ghazali believes that those who share this opinion know nothing about the spirit of Islam. He goes on to say that the love of God is essential for Muslims, as the Qur'an says, "He (God) likes them and they like Him," and the Prophet has said that nobody's faith is complete unless he likes God and His Prophet more than anything which exists. Ghazali ends by saying, "He who knows God loves Him".

Then Ghazali adds, the more one knows God, the more one loves Him; but no one can know God perfectly, save God Himself. For the finite is not able entirely to comprehend the infinite. Likewise, he adds, God does not reveal Himself fully and equally to everyone in the future life, but He appears according to the capacity of different beholders; on the other hand, the manifestation of God is ever-increasing and there is no end to it — this is the explanation of everlasting bliss in Paradise. Here Ghazali makes one more distinction, and that is between the vision of God and the impression it makes on one. Two beholders may equally see God, but one's joy may be more than the others. Like two lovers who see the beloved, the one who is more in love sees more in the beloved and gets more pleasure out of it. Those who carry with themselves a pure heart to the Hereafter, it is a clearer mirror for divine light to be reflected in; and those whose mirror be rusted, the light does not reflect at all.

As for this world, when the love of God takes root in our souls, it leads us to humanity as a whole, and to love them all as creatures of a single Creator.

In dealing with the nature of God, Ghazali, after quoting "Truly God has created Adam out of his own image," claims that though meditation is the highest kind of worship, to think about the nature of God is dangerous, because human insight in general is weak and God's light is so strong that it may blind it, like bats which cannot endure the light of the sun. But there are men whose insight is capable of receiving divine light, and for whom the existence of God is clearer than the sun itself.

The main point of Ghazali's teaching in the *Kimiya'* appears to be a desire for the penetration of the barriers of formalism, and to represent the very heart and spirit of Islam in very simple language.

#### The *Kimiya'* and the *Ihya'*

The *Kimiya'* in quantity is approximately one-third of the *Ihya'*, and is as rich in quality, though only in parts; but on the whole it falls short of the *Ihya'* as far as profundity is concerned. It is true that the *Kimiya'* is a translation of the *Ihya'*, but Ghazali has deliberately left out

debatable passages in order that his Persian book be clear-cut and understandable to those whose knowledge of religion is not sufficient. That is why Ghazali again and again refers to the *Ihya'* as a reference and a source of fuller information for those who seek a thorough knowledge and a deeper insight into the subject matter. Ghazali, in the *Kimiya'*, likewise refers to his other Arabic works, and especially to *Bidayat al-Hidayat* (The Beginning of Guidance).

A large proportion of the *Ihya'* consists of quotations from the Qur'an or Hadith, whereas in the *Kimiya'* these quotations are comparatively few and far between, and very often are followed by their Persian translation. Apart from Qur'anic references, there are many Arabic poetry quotations in the *Ihya'*, but in the *Kimiya'*, in contrast, only one single line of Persian poetry can be found, and that comes in the section on music and song, and it is not a good poem either; it is a poem which has become one by poetic licence. The *Kimiya'*, like the *Ihya'*, and perhaps to a higher degree, contains a large number of parables, sayings, and records of deeds of the prophets, mystics and saints, some of which are somehow naïve, and yet with all their simplicity there is considerable practical sense displayed in them.

#### Literary significance of the *Kimiya'*

The fifth century of the Hijra, of which Ghazali saw the second half (450-505 A.H.), in the history of Persian literature, has been considered as the golden age of prose writing. Masterpieces such as the *Tarikh-i-Bayhaqi*, the *Siyasat-Nameh*, the *Qabus Nameh*, the *Chahar-Maqaleh* and the *Kimiya'e Sa'adat*, all belong to this period. Ghazali's *Kimiya'*, apart from being a great work of ethics, is one of the few models of Persian prose. One may claim that Ghazali by his *Kimiya'* has served the Persian language as much as his Arabic works have contributed to Muslim culture. Had Ghazali written only the *Kimiya'*, he still would have been a great literary figure in Persian culture.

Ghazali has a style of his own which is lucid, mature, simple and attractive. Even his Arabic writings, we are told, are quite distinct from others. One of Ghazali's contemporaries<sup>4</sup> says of him, "Although some critics claim that Ghazali is sometimes careless in his grammar and syntax, they all agree that Ghazali as an author, speaker and pamphleteer, is so skilful that no other literary man can remotely approach him".

It is strange that Ghazali, with all his thoughtful meditation and absolute devotion, which normally leaves no room for literary endeavours, could still produce such a work as the *Kimiya'* in a year. Ghazali, unlike his compatriot scholars in Arabic who wrote Persian — if ever they did — in Arabic construction, wrote in perfect Persian. Even his *Kimiya'*, which is supposed to be a translation, sounds as if it were originally written in Persian. Ghazali, according to some authorities,<sup>5</sup> even tried his pen in both Arabic and Persian poetry. There are a few quatrains attributed to him in these two languages. The prose translation of a Persian quatrain of his, which sounds like one of those great Ruba'iyat of Ghazali's contemporary, Khayyam, runs like this:

"We threw our prayer cloaks on to the top of a jar  
of wine;

We performed our ablutions in the dust of the tavern,  
Hoping that we might find in the tavern  
That life which we had lost at the *Madrasahs* (religious  
schools)."

<sup>4</sup> Abdul-Ghafer, author of *History of Neishapur*.  
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*Hajivat, the aristocrat, possesses a distinguished manner of speech*

# THE KARAGÖZ SHOW

## or the

# MINIATURE THEATRES OF TURKEY

By Harold R. Battersby, F.R.A.S.

*Karagöz, the mischievous representative of the people, has the vulgar tongue of the people*



**It is a lamented fact that the modern world of Turkish entertainment scorns the coloured shadow shows of Karagöz, and the miniature theatres rot in backyards, to disappear before the bones of the famous showmen of old have whitened**

### The value of Karagöz Shows in the study of Turkish history

Although brief references to the Turkish Karagöz Shows may be found in earlier works than those of the seventeenth century, it is from the time of Evliya Chelebi, the famous Turkish traveller, until the "Tanzimat", or Turkish Reformation, when no noticeable change in the social structure of Istanbul took place, and due partly to this fact, that Karagöz became so very popular with the masses in the capital city of the Ottoman Empire.

Istanbul was a strange city where the "seventy-two" nations of the world met, yet were divided by religion, race and tradition. Races and sects lived their own lives in different quarters with borders controlled by the Imperial State. Minorities and Turks alike suffered the petty controls of administration while the frontiers advanced and receded. The houses of Armenians, Greeks, Jews and "Frenks" in general, were recognized by their drab appearance, while they, themselves, were distinguished by compulsion to wear certain styles of clothes. The many attempts, usually at foreign instigation, to reform the administration, militia and justice of the empire, came to naught. The ruling class was divided roughly into those centred around the Court, the clergy and the army.

The ingenuity of the subordinated classes in finding an outlet for their feelings through Karagöz Shows has resulted in the finest of folk satires, which are considered as invaluable for the partial study of Turkish history. The oppressed always look for methods to expose their discomforts, but most of the Karagöz plays were evidently drawn from events and incidents which took place in the capital. For obvious reasons none of the characters show any likeness of having been taken from the Seraglio, *Medressehs* (religious colleges) or *Ocak* (janissaries), yet

those people who inspired sympathy or terror gave the Karagöz Shows character.

### What the Karagöz Shows consist of

When most Englishmen are introduced to Karagöz or have the privilege of watching a show, they immediately think of Punch and Judy. In actual fact there are but few likenesses. It is true that both Punch and Judy and Karagöz may have been invented to express the sentiment of the masses, but the latter definitely reached a higher state of perfection. Both shows require a miniature stage, but whereas Punch and Judy dolls may be controlled by the hands in close contact with the figures (not being a true puppet show), Karagöz figures are controlled with sticks. The many charactered Karagöz plays are acted out by brightly-coloured figures cut from camel hide. Nimble hands control the stocks, about 18 to 24 in. long, fitted into holes in the stable and movable parts of the figures. One stage manager often controlled several characters at one time in a single play lasting up to fifteen minutes. The great showman was one who possessed a dozen voices and much of the ability of a ventriloquist.

The stage is set behind a white curtain, as if at a real theatre, but the curtain never opens to the audience. Behind the semi-transparent hide scenery and figures a tray of candles burn. The whole scene is shown on to the "screen" in colour, while the perspiring showman stands hidden behind the set, being careful not to cast his shadow beyond the lighting.

Each show commences with *gazeller*, lyric poems recited by the two leading players, Karagöz and Hajivat. Invariably, after this recital the first figure to appear is Hajivat, who opens the discourse with his *Hay-Hak* (Hey-



Right), and the audience immediately gains a purely mystical impression, as the shadows on the screen might easily be compared to the transitory lives of men.

Karagöz has the vulgar tongue of the people, but Hajivat, or Haji-eyyat, possesses a distinguished manner of speech. The two contrast so vividly that continuous misunderstandings arise.

It is usual for the common folk to mimic and mock the socially superior, but the Karagöz showmen often strained their dialogues beyond the degrees of propriety, causing Western travellers to describe the plays as pornographic.

### Some of the characters of the Karagöz Shows

There were as many showmen in the old successful days of the Karagöz, as there were individual figures of the classical characters to suit the taste of each manager, but the essence of the plays changed little, and many of the old names are still used. Karagöz, the mischievous representative of the people, and Hajivat, the aristocrat, will live on for ever in the history of Turkish folklore.

The "Albanian Forest Ranger", "Beberuhi the Dwarf," the "Monster", "Zenne" the woman, the "Ghost", are never-to-be-forgotten characters, but they are outshone by "Bekri Mustafa", who has been described as the "Drunkard", "Tuzsuz Bekir", known often as the "Braggart", and "Tiryak", the "Opium Smoker".

Bekri Mustafa in the fourth act of *Karagöz on the Yalova* winds up the play to his own glory. This *Journey to Yalova* is the older *Hoppa* (the Frivolous), which had as its scene Yalova, ancient Therma Pythia, where the Bithynians honoured the old gods and goddesses of Asia Minor. The famous hot springs were the delight of the population of seventeenth century Istanbul, and according to Evliya, when the season of cherries approached so did the several hundred tents.

It is possible that Bekri Mustafa is the famous character who frequently assumed the functions of judge during the reign of Sultan Murad IV.

### Some titles of the Karagöz plays

The people of Istanbul, in every quarter, were exasperated by the persistence of Arab beggars until the Kadi took action in the sixteenth century. Many of our European travellers confirm these pariahs to have assumed a holy mien, backed up by their language of the Faithful. From this source of irritation developed the plays "The Arab Beggar and the Albanian" and "Mustafa the Drunkard and the Blind Arab Beggar".

*Hamam* (Turkish bath) is closely connected with the story of Gazi Boshnak, and is possibly the parody of a

strong janissary, who broke into a bath for women. The Kadi of Istanbul took action against some drunken janissaries in the sixteenth century when they invaded a bath and stirred up the indignation of the people.

In *Arrows of Inspiration*, written by Nef'i, the famous poet, who died in 1635, violent attacks are made against "Kirli", or "Dirty Nigar", a bad woman, and such likeness in theme in the Karagöz Show "Civan Nigar" leads to confusion. "Civan Nigar" later became "Bloody Nigar".

The *Fools' Asylum* is a satire of the foreign physician. It is recorded that at the beginning of the eighteenth century 93 per cent of the surgeons and 81 per cent of the physicians of Istanbul were not Turks.

*The Mutes, The Heir, The Fashionable People and The Three Master Brigands* are all well-known Karagöz plays, but *Yazici* never found its rightful position at the head of the whole series.

*Yazici* is mentioned in the history written by Rashid. It sets out to ridicule the position of the public scribe. These "men of letters", in their ignorance, caused such misunderstandings, stupid blunders and nigh perilous actions that the powers at the Seraglio were forced to take notice of a certain Osman, the head of the scribes. Ahmet Refik in his *Life in Istanbul in the Twelfth Century of the Hedjira* speaks of courageous Osman denouncing his colleagues for their want of knowledge.

When *Ayvaz Serkis, The Armenian of Van and Tiryak* (meaning in Turkish "addicted", usually to tobacco, opium, alcohol, tea) arrived on the stage, behind the curtain the showman gave full vent to his mimicking of the Armenian way of pronouncing Turkish.

No longer do clapping hands, laughter and tears, sighs and hisses enliven the spirit of the coffee-houses. The political nature of the Karagöz Shows led to controls which caused the old, popular antics of the figures to drift towards privacy.

In the autumn, when the boys between the ages of one and thirteen are wearing those peculiar flat-bottomed basin-like blue hats, one can be sure of circumcision parties, for the heat of the day has lessened and the boys are not liable to faint. If there is but a single child to undergo the operation, a cockerel is sought to be sacrificed so that he will not be alone in his honouring of the Muslim faith. Then, as Karagöz is fast becoming an entertainment of the past, Hayali Koochook Ali, the last great Karagöz showman of this day, may be asked to give a show.

It is a lamented fact that the modern world of Turkish entertainment scorns the coloured shadow shows of Karagöz, and the miniature theatres rot in backyards, to disappear before the bones of the famous showmen of old have whitened.

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# NAPOLEON AND ISLAM

by Dr. A. K. Germanus

**"In the second volume of Las Cases' *Memoirs* (p. 287), Napoleon expatiates on the difference between Christianity and Islam. 'In the Christian religion punishments prevail and penitences are imposed, while Islam promises rewards for good deeds. Christianity is the religion of fear, Islam the religion of promise, and, consequently, attracts the mind and soul of man.'"**



*Napoleon Bonaparte (d. 1825 C.E.)  
The Battle of the Pyramids, fought  
near Cairo (July 1798), brought  
Egypt under Napoleon's control*

## The crass ignorance of Muslim rulers in India and Egypt during the days of Napoleon

All the marvellous military exploits of Napoleon are surpassed in romantic picturesqueness by his adventure in Egypt. The great battles which he fought on the European continent were won by dint of the tactical novelty of the *tirailleurs*, an outcome of the revolutionary street fights, and by his pushing annihilation strategy. The adventure of baffling the British fleet and landing in Africa unobserved manifests not only the freaks of this extraordinary genius, but reveals also his trend towards the grandiose, the audacious and romantic recklessness.

Distances at the end of the eighteenth century were immeasurably longer than they are today, and Egypt lay deeply slumbering in a dim haze which even imagination could hardly pierce. So much the more foolhardy and desperate seemed an expedition to Africa. Very few Europeans had a distinct idea of the Near East, and the rulers of Egypt, the Mamluks, knew even less of Europe than the average French grocer did of Turkey. The ignorance which enveloped the sometime sharp-minded and keen Muslims in the eighteenth century is more distressing than alarming. Siraj al-Dawlah, the Nawab of Murshidabad, thought that London was a village compared with his capital, on the roof of which one could walk above the whole town. The Mamluks of Egypt, learning from French business men resident in Egypt about the approach of a mighty French fleet carrying a huge army, ridiculed the importance of this news and consoled themselves with a threat to trample the whole expedition under the hooves of their fiery steeds. Shortly afterwards the fleet of Nelson arrived before Alexandria searching for Napoleon's expeditionary forces and asked for free entrance into the harbour in order to lie in ambush for the French. The commander of Alexandria, Muhammad Kuraim, and his learned advisers apprehended a trick in this demand and thought the British fleet identical

with Napoleon's forces, so little could they distinguish between the nations of Europe!

We possess, besides the memoirs of the French generals and scholars, a valuable Egyptian contemporary source of information about Napoleon's campaign, that of 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti.<sup>1</sup> He was an eye-witness of most of the events and records those which he did not experience himself from reliable persons after a careful examination. He was elected a member of the great Council of Nine established by Napoleon. His trustworthiness is beyond suspicion and his impartiality is proven by the objectivity of his style, which, considering the degenerate condition of Arabic prevalent in those times in the writings even of the most renowned *shaiyks* (religious scholars) is fairly correct and most readable.

## Napoleon in Egypt

Egypt had suffered under the merciless rule of the Mamluks, who exploited the people and abandoned them to

<sup>1</sup> Jabarti's book has been partially translated into French by Cardin (1838) and wholly by Shafiq Mansur in 1896; a Turkish translation of the campaign in Egypt also exists.

Another Oriental source is the book of Nikola al-Turk, who served under the Syrian Amir Bachir al-Shihabi, who sent him on an errand to Egypt, where he witnessed the French campaign till the exodus of the French army. His book, too, was translated into French by Desgranges, Paris, 1839. His taskmaster, Bashir al-Shihabi, intended to make common cause with the French in a revolt against the Sultan of Turkey. At the assassination of General Kleber, Nikola composed a rather unpoetic elegy on the death of his hero (see 'Omar Farrukh's *Arba'a Udaba Mu'asirin*, p. 23).

The President of the "Council of Nine", 'Abdullah al-Sharqawi, has compiled a pamphlet on the French campaign: *Tuhfat al-Nazirin fi man walla Misra min al-wulat wa al-Salatin*, but has no historical value whatever. Compare the grand work of 'Abd al-Rahman al-Rafi'i, *Tarikh al-Harakat al-Qaumiyya*, Vol. I., pp. 63-471, and Jurji Zaydan, *Tarikh Misr al-hadithah*, Vol. II, pp. 82-139.



abject poverty, while they themselves enjoyed the highest luxury then conceivable. The *'ulamas* were subservient to the will of the rulers. The Ottoman Sultan swayed a purely nominal power in Egypt and was incapable of remedying the social evils devastating all the Provinces of his empire. The latent discontent of the people could not assert itself in revolt as the devout belief in the righteousness of the *'ulamas* stifled all hopes of success. Napoleon, who had previously studied the condition of the Muslim East from books of travel, like that of Volney and others, was very well informed about the conditions of Egypt. There never was an expedition, however risky it might have been, so well prepared and so solidly organized on a scientific basis, as that of Napoleon to Egypt. He brought a printing press from Rome, Arabists like Marcel and Venture and a number of Mechitarist composers accompanied the army, not to speak of a hundred other specialists in every line of learning. When he arrived at Alexandria he issued a proclamation in Arabic, composed and printed on the battleship "Orion", in which he assured the people of Egypt that he brought them freedom, equality and fraternity, the three mighty watchwords of the French Revolution. He, an offspring of this Revolution, had long ago exempted himself of the shackles of the clergy and, freed from clerical superstitions, began the text: "In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful. There are no gods, except the true God, Who has no son and no partner in His kingdom!" He declared he was a friend of the Muslims and as proof adduced the fact that he had expelled the Pope from Rome and scattered his clericals, who had been the enemies of Muslims for long centuries. He had driven away the chevaliers of Malta who swore an eternal hatred and enmity against the true believers. He referred to the Sultan of Turkey in his quality of Caliph, in whose friendship he had come to Egypt to punish the Mamluks.

This proclamation, composed in a somewhat rickety style, was the first printed Arabic text, and may be considered the starting point of the national Egyptian Press. The printing press itself was transported on shore and later became the stock of the Arabic Press at Bulaq, which issued the long-neglected literary remains of the Arab golden age. The merit of Napoleon in the sphere of Arabic learning at the beginning of his Egyptian adventure cannot be duly evaluated. A youth of twenty-nine years of age, imbued with the new-fangled notions of democracy, introduced into the smouldering edifice of the abused and exploited East a new spirit, unknown in the practice of the Islamic East, namely, that of the rule and voice of the people, although in theory Islam is the religion and the system of democratic government. But, if we envisage the course of Islamic history, we sorely miss the fundamental principle of Islam in practical reality.

### Napoleon and the *'Ulama* of Egypt

Napoleon instituted a council of nine members out of the *'ulama* as representing the people. This was a novelty, however deficient, as the *'ulama* did not fully represent the people, who were not consulted either as to the selection of the members or as to the acceptance of this long disused principle of democratic election. The Egyptian people, downtrodden for centuries by its rulers, was not in the position of understanding and applying a democratic principle as it had been carried out in England, and the State-Council was the only means of advancing by a progressive step towards elevating the broad masses of the ignorant and poor *fellahin* up to a democratic workable constitution.

Napoleon tried to convince the shaikhs that he acted as

a friend of Islam and showed even an inclination towards embracing Islam. In the memoirs of Antomarchi, his Italian physician at Saint Helena, *Derniers Moments de Napoleon*, p. 749, we read that the Mamluks conceived Napoleon, the *Sultan Kebir*, at least 6 ft. tall, and were very much astonished to notice that he was of slight middle height and slender. Napoleon said to Antomarchi: "The Muslim Imams excited the populace against me. I had to play their own role and quieted them with the means which most appealed to them. For the *'ulama* are capable of fanaticizing the people without being fanatics themselves. They have taken my side and offered me the acceptance of Islam, to clothe myself in Oriental dress, and assured me that a hundred thousand men will rise in arms for me. All Islam will stand up for me. But what about anti-alcoholism? We Westerners are used to drinks. And circumcision? I acquiesced in everything and promised to follow their advice, but on condition that the ceremony must be a grand festival commemorated by pious acts. I shall order the building of a mosque as beautiful as that of the Santa Sophia, which will be inaugurated on the day of my conversion to Islam. The shaikhs showed a great complaisance and agreed to everything that they had previously denied. If I could have stayed in Egypt and if General Kleber had not fallen a victim to an assassin, there was no power on earth to evict us from Africa, but General Menour was incapable and everything was lost".

### Napoleon identifies himself with Muslims

In the *Memoirs de Sainte Hélène*, by Las Cases, Vol. I, p. 45, we read Napoleon's discourse on the Turkish Sultan Salim III (d. 1807 C.E.). "I have written to the Sultan," he said. "Get out of your palace, put yourself at the head of your troops and revive the beautiful days of your realm." The Sultan, who in mind was very progressive and thought of imposing reforms on his subjects from above, answered that those times of his glorious ancestors had passed away and such an audacious step was out of season. Napoleon still believed that the force latent in Islam was so alive that an active, brave Sultan could achieve wonders and that even he, himself, if he could have attached the Mamluks to the French, could have conquered the world.

But Napoleon, with all his wit and sagacity, committed grave blunders like every other tyrant whose success blinds him to the facts. In spite of his endeavours to gain the hearts of Muslims by honouring their religious festivals, such as the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad and the local feasts of the rise of the Nile, only those *'ulama* took part in the ceremonies who were in his pay and connived at the theatrical parades of an insincere religious conviction. He put on Oriental dress and a large turban on his head and had himself painted in this attire. As an enlightened rationalist, a child of the eighteenth century, his Islam may be compared with the lofty conception of the Arab philosophers of yore, Ibn Rushd (d. 1198 C.E.) and Ibn Bajja (d. 1139 C.E.), who claimed a special position for the learned and granted a liberal view on religion for those versed in the structure of philosophy, but deemed the self-same liberality detrimental if applied to the mass of the people.

### The influence of the Qur'an on Napoleon

Napoleon was no atheist. He denied his being so on several occasions. While "first consul", he allowed the Pope to return to Rome unmolested, and Napoleon permitted the practice of Christian worship, nay, even encouraged it, but his Republican extremist friends reprimanded him for this supposed betrayal of the revolutionary



achievements. His answer was very characteristic: "I do not believe in Christianity: I am well aware of the absurdities of its dogmas, and I wonder how the Pope and his archbishops can preach salvation and welfare in the next world while they live in the greatest luxury and even debauchery in their terrestrial existence. This contradiction extinguishes every vestige of their sincerity. But, while I was walking in the garden of the palace of Malmaison (his favourite resort) at nightfall, I looked up at the starry skies and asked myself, 'Who has created all this?'. Nothing but religion can answer this query."

To look up at the stars at night and to find the eternal Creator, who does not beget and is not begotten! Napoleon had read the Qur'an from cover to cover. During his return voyage from Egypt amid the lurking dangers of British ships, he clutched the French translation of the Qur'an and derived strength and hope from it. The very words uttered by him emanated from the divine revelation of many a Meccan chapter, in which the power of God is manifested by the phenomena of nature.

At another instance he broke out into a sincere confession of an intrinsic belief: "One evening I heard the church bells ringing, and this reminded me of my childhood, when I used to take off my hat and pray. I was startled at this souvenir, which thrilled me into a sweet emotion of memory. How much more, I thought, must the memory of childhood live in the hearts of those who are not inured to hardness as I have been? No, I cried, the people want belief; they want a religion; and it is atrocious to deprive them of this feeling and solace."

Some present advised the "first consul" to educate the people to the religion of reason. "This will not do," he replied, "the majority of the French imperatively wants the Church!" "If you bow before the majority of the French," interrupted Volney, "call back the Bourbons!" Napoleon never spoke to him again after that.

Again on the island of Saint Helena, as we read in Las Cases' *Memoirs* (Vol. I, p. 667), he exclaimed: "Everything proves the existence of God. This is beyond doubt. But all our religions are the children of men who fight one another. The real and true religion is that which has existed from all eternity, the religion of morality and indisputable truths. The priests honeycomb this very religion with fraudulent myths not essential to its intrinsic force". Is not the influence of Islamic teaching clearly discernible in this conception, the religion which restores the original revelation and accepts as prophets all those who by divine command have preached the self-same truths? Reason errs on misleading paths when it discards facts which, though beyond reason, regulate the conduct of all affairs in the universe. If reason stumbles into atheism, it contradicts and shatters its very existence.

Again, according to Las Cases, Napoleon spoke about his campaign in Egypt (Sec. I, p. 811): "Volney, who had travelled in the East before the Revolution, stated that in order to occupy Egypt three big wars were necessary: against Britain, Turkey and the Egyptians. The last one would be the most terrible. He was mistaken, because we easily surmounted the difficulties with the people, who became our friends. A handful of French soldiers was sufficient to destroy the Mamluks. Our campaign was dissimilar to the campaigns of the Crusades. The Crusaders had an innumerable army compared with ours and were instigated by fanaticism. My army was very small, probably only thirty-six thousand, and my soldiers were so little enthusiastic about their business that they were often tempted to leave the colours. The country was so alluring and so rich and

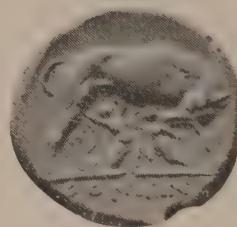
cheap that I once thought of reducing their pay. I had such an absolute sway over my soldiers that by one word I could have turned them into Muslims!"

In the second volume of Las Cases' *Memoirs* (p. 287), Napoleon expatiates on the difference between Christianity and Islam. "In the Christian religion punishments prevail and penitences are imposed, while Islam promises rewards for good deeds. Christianity is the religion of fear, Islam the religion of promise, and, consequently, attracts the mind and soul of man."

### Napoleon failed in Egypt because of the selfish 'Ulama

In spite of this enlightened view on men's nature and their inner motives, Napoleon committed grave faults. He brought the promise of freedom to the Egyptian people, which they had never enjoyed before; he introduced means of culture and established scientific institutions which resuscitated the past grandeur of Egypt; he even instigated the decrepit shaikhs of the Azhar Mosque to relearn their Arabic and mould it into secular shape fit for eighteenth century conditions. But he overlooked one important factor — the ignorance of the people and the malevolence of their leaders. Sultan Selim III also thought of elevating his subjects from their abject condition, but his selfish surroundings betrayed him and frustrated his endeavours. Napoleon, too, was frustrated by those 'ulama who seemingly agreed to his reforms and enjoyed all the amenities of life offered to them by their patron, but, being unripe for understanding the real value of all the innovations and being more selfish than fanatic, and being eager to preserve their personal privileges at the expense of their Muslim brethren in a less fortunate position, counteracted all reforms. He tried to reorganize the laws of the country and the 'ulama opposed this to the utmost. Napoleon once said that he would go down to posterity with his law-code in his hands — and, verily, almost all Eastern countries have adopted today the Code Napoleon.

He tried to convince the leading shaikhs to approach the spirit of the age, to grasp the hands of the rejuvenating West in order to get rid of a century-old bondage, material, spiritual and moral. The shaikhs were incapable of divesting themselves of a narrow-minded egotism combined with a one-sided learning bordering on ignorance and, consequently, roused the people to revolt. The French soldiery stifled the revolt in cold blood and the Egyptians again sank back into the clutches of the Mamluks. Nevertheless, Muhammad 'Ali extirpated the race and set into motion those reforms which Napoleon had inaugurated, thus awakening the slumbering East to the progress of the West and relearning all those noble methods which Islam had given the West many centuries ago.



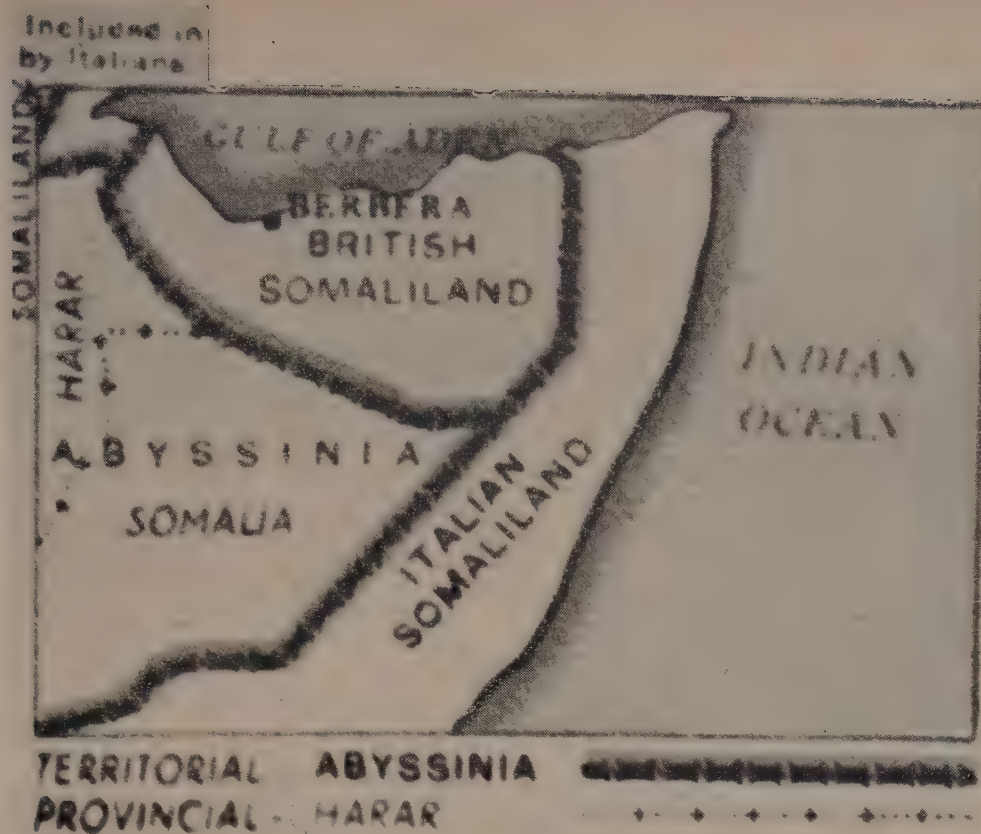
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## SOMALILAND TODAY

THE HISTORY BEHIND THE HANDING OVER OF  
25,000 SQUARE MILES OF SOMALI TERRITORY TO ABYSSINIA  
THROUGHOUT ETHIOPIA THE SOMALI MUSLIMS ARE DENIED  
ELEMENTARY HUMAN RIGHTS

by 'Abdul Rahman 'Ali Muhammad

### History and religion of the country

The known history of the Somali tribes extends over a period of 600 to 900 years. Right from the beginning of their history to the present day the Somali people have been Muslim in their entirety. The outstanding feature of their history is, therefore, the long and continued association of Somaliland and her people with the Islamic world. The Somali people are Sunnis and adhere to the Shafi'i school of law. They are fervent believers. The Qur'an and the Hadith are taught to the nomadic tribes by religious teachers who live and move with their respective tribes. The religious teacher is called in Somali, *Wadad*. The *Wadad* is trained and taught by well-known and learned 'Ulama and *shaikhs* (religious teachers).

The Somali tribal law and custom is a voluntary system approved by the tribal elders as being most suitable for their way of life, and the settlement of their claims and disputes, although the greater part of tribal law consists of the applica-

tion of the provisions of the Shari'ah. The *diyah* (compensation for causing death), compensation for wounding and the law of evidence are cases in point. The other tribal customs are also built within the framework of the Shari'ah; for instance, customs not forbidden by Islam (compensation for personal insult; those who are forbidden by Shari'ah from inter-marriage do not inter-marry). Some of the main Somali tribes, however, have a special prohibition as regards inter-marriage of cousins from the father's side to the fourth degree.

The lands of the Somalis stretch on the coastline of North-East Africa from Obokh in the west to Ras Hafun in the east, whilst their pasture lands and wells traverse as far south-west as Hawash and south-east as far as the northern frontier district bordering on Kenya. The area of the Somali territories is approximately 500,000 square miles with a total population of about 3,500,000. In the past the Somali people, through the very important factor of being one people, with



one religion (Islam) and bound together by a common language, tradition and customs, enjoyed unrestricted movement both for themselves and their livestock. The territory was known as Somaliland and was one unit geographically, racially, culturally and religiously.

This was the position seventy to eighty years ago when their territory was carved up by the foreign powers, namely, Great Britain, France, Italy and Abyssinia. From this emerged the strange-sounding names of British Somali, French Somali, Italian Somali and Ethiopian Somali, although the British Somali is no more British than the Ethiopian Somali is an Amhar. The Somalis have merely been separated by an artificial boundary through the administrative action of the governments concerned!

### **How the British came to occupy Somaliland; their agreements with the Somalis**

The Khedival Government of Egypt was the first to exercise political authority over the area now known as the Somaliland Protectorate and Harar Province. The Khedival Government occupied Berbera, Bulhar, Zeilah and Harar in 1874. Harar was the greatest trading town of the interior and the chief source of supply for Aden. The Khedival Government retired from these areas in 1884 on account of the unsettled condition which prevailed in Egypt and the Sudan as a result of the Mahdi rising, but the Egyptian occupation left its mark on Somaliland. The mosque, the lighthouse and the water supply system exist to this day in Berbera to remind one of their short stay. What was most gratifying to the Somalis, however, was the fact that under Egyptian administration the Somalis were still recognized as the people having the right to administer the townships of Harar and Zeilah. The last Governor of Harar was Amir 'Abdullah, who was a Somali paid by the Khedival Government.

Before the advent of European foreign powers the Somali tribes formed one loose economic unit and the tribes moved freely across each other's territories as the need arose. They were interdependent and the unit was self-contained. The produce of the Harar Province was sufficient for the Somaliland Protectorate and the neighbouring territories. The excess produce was exported to the outside world through the port of Zeilah. The import requirements of the Somalis living in the Harar Province were obtained through Zeilah. The sheep, *ghee* (a Hindi word for clarified butter), hides and skins, ivory, wax, gums and ostrich feathers from the Haud, the Ogaden, Webi Shabelli and Webi Gananeh were brought down to the ports of Berbera and Bulhar for sale, and in exchange cloth, sugar and other imported goods were obtained. On the other hand tribes now known as British Protected Tribes used to graze their livestock at the Marrar Prairie and Abonsa, a short distance from Harar, and all over the Haud.

### **The British not empowered to dispose of every position of the Somali tribes**

Immediately on the departure of the Khedival Government the British Government sent a representative to negotiate treaties with the Somali tribes on the Red Sea coast. It is as a result of these treaties that the British Government exercises authority over the Somaliland Protectorate. The delegation which visited London in March 1955, and of which the writer of this article was a member, was sent to prevent the handing over to Ethiopia by the British Government of 25,000 square miles inhabited by the tribes who had been pledged protection for the areas inhabited by them. The facts are as follows:

(a) certain agreements between these tribes and Great Britain were signed in the years 1884 and 1886 and were ratified by the British Government through the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, who was empowered to do so. The purpose of entering into these agreements is clearly stated by the tribal elders in the following words:

"... for the maintenance of our independence, the preservation of order, and other good and sufficient reasons."

The tribal elders had placed voluntarily their tribes and territory under Her Britannic Majesty's protection which was extended to them. In the Agreements the areas were defined as "the territory presently inhabited by them or being under their control". The Agreement said:

(i) That the tribes concerned were pledged and bound never to cede, sell, mortgage, or otherwise give for occupation, save to the British Government, any portion of the territory presently inhabited by them or being under their control.

(ii) That the British Government undertook to extend to them and to the territories under their authority and jurisdiction the "gracious favour and protection of Her Majesty the Queen-Empress".

From this it is obvious that at no time did the tribal elders transfer their land to the "Crown" or empower the British Government to dispose of any portion of their territories.

### **The 1897 Treaty**

(b) By the Anglo-Ethiopian Treaty of 1897 Great Britain fixed a boundary which limited the Somaliland Protectorate to an artificial frontier and thereby transferred to the "foreign" sovereignty and jurisdiction of Ethiopia territories inhabited by the "Protected Tribes". It was done without the knowledge or consent of the "Protected Tribes". The Government did not publish or give official notice to the tribal elders as to what had been done. The territory that was transferred early this year never belonged to the Ethiopians and was not occupied by them. Besides, the Somalis and the Amharras share nothing in common. In language, diet, culture, tribal customs and way of life the two races are absolutely different. The Ethiopians (Amharras) are Christians of the Ethiopian Church and the Somalis are Muslims. The British Government cannot but be aware of the fact that the territories now transferred belong to the "Protected Tribes" (vide Annex 1 to the 1897 Treaty at the end of this article).

(c) The Protected Tribes were signed away by Britain to the Ethiopian Government as an act of appeasement. Her Majesty's envoy had instructions which he interpreted to mean that he should give first place to the conciliation of Ethiopia during the last phase of the Khartoum campaign. There was nervousness at that time about the influence of the "Mahdi" spreading south (see *The Social and Diplomatic Memoirs* (1894-1901), by Sir James Rennell Rodd, p. 181. Sir James was Her Britannic Majesty's envoy).

(d) From 1897 up to the years 1931-35 this boundary remained only on paper. It was only when the Boundary Commission of 1931-35 was sent to survey and demarcate the frontier that the tribal elders became aware of the delimitation of the Protectorate. Then the tribal elders protested strongly against the delimitation of the Protectorate and a European member of the Boundary Commission was killed in the disturbances which followed. The military had to be used against the "Protected Tribes" and collective punishment laws were especially enacted for the protection of the Boundary Pillars and Commission (cf. 1931



Ordinances of the Somaliland Laws). Thus the Ethiopians had never been in active occupation of the territory in question and never administered it before the Boundary Commission came. This becomes clear when we remember the tribes of the Protectorate wandered deep south in their hereditary and traditional grazing areas without being in any way hindered by the Ethiopian authorities and without being subject to their control.

(e) The 1897 Anglo-Ethiopian Treaty was a violation of the safeguards and protection solemnly undertaken by Her Britannic Majesty's Government when the 1884 and 1886 Treaties were signed. Thus the Somali people, who placed implicit trust in the pledges and written word of the British Government, have been wronged by the 1897 Anglo-Ethiopian Treaty.

### The 1955 Somali Delegation to England

The Delegation to England had three interviews with the Secretary of State for the Colonies. In view of the above facts the petition of the Delegation said:

- (i) That the existing conflict between the guarantees pledged to the "Protected Tribes" in the 1884 and 1886 Treaties and the transfer of territory to Ethiopia in the 1897 Anglo-Ethiopian Treaty be reviewed.
- (ii) That if the answer is "No" to (i) above, postponement be granted as to the handing over date so as to enable it to put its case to the United Nations and the International Court at The Hague in a peaceful and constitutional manner.

Although the British Secretary of State showed personal sympathy the answer he gave was "No" to the two pleas of the Somaliland peoples. We are told that no court of law in the United Kingdom has jurisdiction in matters concerning treaty rights. Therefore, the Delegation had no alternative but to put its case to the United Nations.

### Why the Somalis object to the Ethiopian sovereignty

The Somalis are often asked why they object to the Ethiopians taking over the administration of their territory. The answer is that they see too well the denial of self-determination to which the Somali people in Ethiopia are subjected and the intense campaign against Islam which is carried on under the Amharic Rule. The world is really ignorant of the fact that 70 per cent of the population under Ethiopian rule is Muslim. Yet the State Church is Coptic, and it is the deliberate policy of the Emperor of Ethiopia to give every encouragement to induce people to join the State religion.

Here are a few examples of what is happening to the Muslims in Ethiopia:

(1) Private Qur'anic and Arabic schools have been closed down by order. Deep in the Ogaden Province at Dagahbour a famous religious school run by the Shaikh 'Ali Soofi was recently closed down. In this district there are no Ethiopian Christians. The Shaikh was removed to Addis Ababa and that is the last that has been seen of him since.

(2) In the State schools neither Arabic nor the Qur'an is taught.

(3) The Jami' Mosque of Harar is now a church, although there are 800 per cent more Muslims than Christians at Harar.

(4) Even the representative of the Shari'ah—the Qadi—has been denied freedom in his work. He is compelled to keep all his records in Amharic script. Divorce certificates are written in Amharic. These measures, it is evident, if allowed to continue, will bring about the end of the study of

the Qur'an. This does not bode well for the future. For people like the Somalis, who attach such great importance to the practice of their religion, there can be no happiness or contentment in living under such conditions.

Under the new Anglo-Ethiopian Agreement of 1954 Great Britain and Ethiopia agreed that the tribes of the Somaliland Protectorate should not take part in political activities when they are in the reserved areas and the Haud. Thus, in other words, almost half of the population of the Protectorate is denied freedom of speech and the right to self-determination. Throughout Ethiopia the Somalis are denied these elementary human rights.

Over forty sultans and chiefs from the Ogaden Province have fled to Mogadishu for political asylum. Others are taking refuge in the Somaliland Protectorate. These men are the acknowledged and hereditary sultans and chiefs of the Ogaden. Many more have been taken to Addis Ababa and are not allowed to return to their own people.

There is a very large number of Ethiopian students studying abroad. If the Muslims were being allowed a fair opportunity in the benefits of their country 70 per cent of these students ought to be Muslims. Actually there is no Muslim student at all studying abroad. This is a deliberate policy which aims at keeping the Muslims under the Amharras.

In the past the Ethiopians were content with being the ruling class. But now they are determined to secure an economic hold over the country. In the Somali territories, wherever land suitable for cultivation is to be found, the Amharras are granted the sole land rights, although the land in question may have been occupied by Somalis for very many years. Slowly and steadily the whole territory which belongs to the Muslim peoples of Ethiopia is being taken over by the Amharras for colonization.

### The Somalis want a united Somalia

The Somali peoples now realize that they must join together to form a United Somali if they are to retain their culture and are to exercise the right of self-determination which is considered by the world to be a basic right for the democratic government of a country.

#### Annex 1

#### MR. RODD TO THE EMPEROR MENELEK

Your Majesty,

Addis Ababa, May 14, 1896.

With reference to Article II of the Treaty which we are to sign today, I am instructed by my Government in the event of a possible occupation by Ethiopia of territories inhabited by tribes who have formerly accepted and enjoyed British protection in the districts excluded from the limits of the British Protectorate on the Somali Coast, as recognized by your Majesty, to bring to your knowledge the desire of Her Majesty the Queen to receive from your Majesty an assurance that it will be your special care that these tribes receive equitable treatment, and are thus no losers by this transfer of suzerainty.

In expressing the hope that your Majesty will enable me to give this assurance, I have, etc.

RENNELL RODD.

(Translation)

The Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Menelek II, by the grace of God, King of Kings of Ethiopia, to Mr. Rennell Rodd, Envoy of the Kingdom of England.  
Peace be unto you.

Your letter, written in Genbot 1889, respecting the Somalis, has reached me. With regard to the question you have put to me, I give you the assurance that the Somalis who may by boundary arrange-



ments become subjects of Ethiopia shall be well treated and have orderly government.

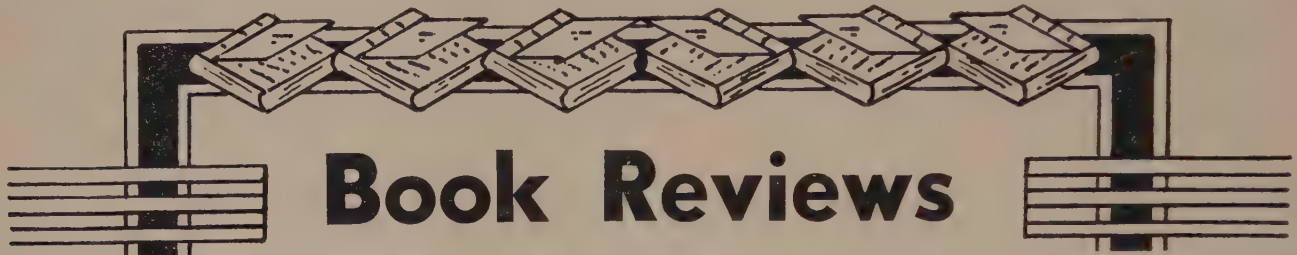
Written at Addis Ababa, the 6th Genbot, 1889 (14th May 1897).  
(Seal of His Majesty the Emperor Menelek II.)

#### ANNEX II

"These negotiations were by no means easy. The Abyssinians had encroached considerably across the frontier which we claimed for the Somali Protectorate east of Gidessa, and Abyssinian huts constructed in the disputed area had been burned by our people, so that the tension between Zeila and N. Harrar had at one time caused some anxiety. The sandy areas involved were in themselves worthless, and we were not disposed to use force in order to compel evacuation of a few square miles of inhospitable country and prolong unneighbourly conditions which would prejudice the trade route. Experience of the nature of the ground in dispute had not given me a better appreciation of real values. The tribes frequenting these regions were nomadic, and the essential for them was to secure free access to grazing grounds and water on either side of the border. The settlement eventually concluded made due provision for this, and though it involved a recognition of Abyssinian jurisdiction over a

certain area claimed by our Protectorate in which Ethiopian outposts had for some time been established, it laid down a well-defined frontier. Makonnen had contemplated a line much further east and complained that we were hard bargainers. *I, on the other hand, interpreting the spirit of my instructions to be in the first place the conciliation of Ethiopia during the last phase of the Khartoum campaign, made certain concessions which were criticised by travellers who had penetrated into Somaliland on big-game expeditions and therefore laid claim to special knowledge.* It would, however, have been impossible to dislodge the Abyssinians from posts which they had occupied without having recourse to arms, and a failure to reach settlement would have prejudiced our certainty of securing friendly neutrality on the western side. The arrangement was only accepted *ad referendum*, but it was fully approved by the authorities at home" (*Social and Diplomatic Memoirs (Second Series), 1894-1901 — Egypt and Abyssinia*, by The Right Hon. Sir James Rennell Rodd, G.C.B., London, 1923, p. 181).

"A long interview with Lord Salisbury revealed that he was not much preoccupied about Abyssinian encroachments in Somaliland . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 181).



*ISLAM* by the Reverend A. Guillaume, Pelican Books, London, 1954, pages 208, 2/-.

It is a pity that even in these days of easy communications and abundance of Muslim scholars, publishers entrust even work of pure information on Islam to non-Muslims. The unavoidable result is that these publications constitute neither an authoritative work of reference, nor do they narrow down the gulf between the communities.

The author who is Professor of Arabic at London University, must be about seventy years old. As his name suggests, he may be originally a French Roman Catholic. He is an ordained priest; he served actively in the first world war in France and in Cairo; and during the second one in Beirut. Judging from his previous writings on Islam, the present book is an improvement. He is soberer. Is it because the publishers have enjoined this upon him, or is it his age that has changed the blind imitation of the precursors in his youth? Let us hope the latter is the truth. In fact we read on page 29, when in speaking of Muhammad, the author says: "... it is possible to believe that he was a prophet". Again on page 197, he concludes: "The day may come when Muslims and Christians will realize that they have so much in common that they need no longer regard one another with suspicion and dislike. Such a *rapprochement* could only come about by an eclectic process." Further, seeing some of implications of the Christian term "son of God", he goes so far as to say, on page 193, that Muslims "are perfectly right in rejecting the term as blasphemous". There are many passages, which show that he is dissatisfied even with the Church teachings.

Therefore, far from imputing to him any motive of ill-will in the numerous remarks on Islam and its history, we shall admit his honesty and shall try to explain to him and to our readers what has bewildered him and caused expression of unjustifiable opinions. We shall follow the book, which has ten chapters dealing with the history of pre-Islamic Arabia; life of the Prophet; the Qur'an; history of political Islam (empire); the Hadith; Muslim sects; Islamic philosophy and dogmatics; mysticism; trends in

modern Islam; and a comparison between the Christian and Islamic faiths.

On page 4 the author compares the wars of the time of the Prophet with the plundering raids of the pre-Islamic Bedouins. This would be true if the motive had been plunder. The Prophet's "raids" are practically confined to the first year after the Hijra and against the sole city-State of Mecca. There was a state of war existing between the two States, Islamic and Meccan, and the rights of belligerency justify the action. Moreover, bearing economic pressure on the enemy to reduce him to surrender is certainly preferable to the shedding of the blood, so much abhorred by the Qur'an. Again, the Muslim refugees from Mecca, including the Prophet himself, had been deprived of their properties, which were forthwith confiscated by the heathens of Mecca; and there was a case of retaliation. If harsher treatment by former prophets is justified in the Bible (Deuteronomy, Samuel, etc.), why not concede to the Prophet of Islam even what the twentieth century international law recognizes for all belligerents? If Jesus Christ had succeeded David and Solomon — peace on them all! — there is no reason to believe that even Jesus would have acted otherwise.

Page 5. The Qur'an speaks not only of Jews and Christians, but also of the Magians (*majooos*).

Page 6. For lack of any details or references, it is difficult to see what the author means when he asserts that the customs of heathenism have left an indelible mark on Islam. If everything pre-Islamic is considered heathen — which it should not be — and if every such thing continues to be heathen to our author, in spite of its being shorn of idolatry, he may be right to some extent. But in this way there would also be no difference between married life and free love, between calling God a God and calling Jesus or any other created being a God. The Prophet has said in so many words: "In Islam the virtues of the days of ignorance shall be acted upon" (Ibn-Hanbal: *yu'mal f'il-Islam bi-Fada'il al-Jahiliyyah*).

Page 7. The meaning of the idol Manat is given as "fortune". Has he read it *munat*? Suhaili derives it from *mana'at* = *nau'* = rain-star and rain.



Pages 8 and 26. Professor Guillaume says that it is related that the Prophet, in his pre-mission days had sacrificed a goat at the altar of the idol al-'Uzza, but he does not give the source for the determination of al-'Uzza. However, the fact is well-known and is quite innocent. We learn from Bukhari and other sources that there was a hill called Buwanah; the Meccans used to visit it annually, shaved their heads there, slaughtered goats (more as an outing than as a religious sacrifice). A poet also speaks of the "two date trees of Buwanah", whose fruits he had stolen when its guardians had fallen asleep. When as a boy, Muhammad refused from year to year to attend the festival, his aunts reprimanded him, and he accompanied them. If he slaughtered a goat, what harm then? The Qur'an (42:52) says of his pre-revelation days: "Thou didst not know then what was the Scripture and what was the faith . . ." No idols are known on Buwanah. As to the incident of Zaid Ibn 'Amr, it is also recorded by Suhaili on the authority of Bukhari; and there it is not sure that the Prophet offered to Zaid the meat of the sacrificed sheep. The narrator says: it was either presented to the Prophet or the Prophet presented it to Zaid. Whom to give the advantage of doubt?

Page 11. The author recalls the refreshing fact that when the Jews were persecuted by the Romans, "Arabia offered a near asylum" to the Jews. That was not the only occasion; until 1948, the Islamic history (with the exception of al-Hakim, the Fatimide lunatic) has not only not known persecution of Jews, but whenever they suffered in Europe from England to Russia, they always found ready refuge in Islamic countries. Muslims of course did not do this for earthly reward. In spite of the movement for the Jewish home during the mandate of Palestine, the victims of the Nazism had readily found asylum, by thousands, in Islamic countries. There is no truth (pages 12, 42, 44) in the assertion that the Prophet treated the Jews with severity. When there was war with the Qainuqa', for their fault, he could kill, enslave or plunder them, but in fact, he merely asked them to leave the city of Medina with all their property (and there is clear proof that not all the Jews of the Qainuqa' were expelled: many of them remained in Medina even as late as the year 7 A.H. (if not even later). The case of Nadeerites was more reprehensible, since they had plotted to assassinate the Prophet; still he chose to be lenient. There is some sense in the remarks of the late Professor Dr. Wensinck, that the leniency shown them was abused in the Battle of the Ditch, organized by the "expelled" Jews, and there was no reason why the Quraizites should be treated in the same lenient way in order to strengthen the ungrateful. Nevertheless, the Prophet left their fate in the hands of a former ally of theirs with their consent. This arbitrator did nothing other than apply the personal laws of the Jews to the Jews, and — without least interference or suggestion on the part of the Prophet — decreed that the law of Deuteronomy, of the time of Moses, should apply to the Quraizites. This was not the decision of the Prophet, but that of an ordinary Muslim. To get a glimpse of the character of the Prophet one has to recollect that he ordered that the Jews of Banu-'Uraid should annually receive a handsome amount of pension. Or, when the Khaibarite Zainab poisoned him, and explained, "If thou wert a real messenger of God, the poison would not hurt thee," he pardoned her; if she was later beheaded, it was not for the attempted murder of the Prophet, but for the death of another Muslim who had eaten the same poisoned food as was offered to the Prophet.

Page 16. The Battle of Dhuqar did not occur when the Prophet was still at Mecca, but in the year 2 A.H. (cf. Ya'qubi). Before the Hijra, it was the defeat of the Byzan-

tines at the hands of the Persians, which is recorded in the Qur'an. Our author has a tendency to minimize or magnify things according to his desires, not according to facts. Fortunately, how else one is to explain the way in which he speaks of the conquest by the Arabs of the two world powers of the epoch, and both simultaneously. Could the Yemen or Abyssinia, for instance, invade and occupy England or Russia at the end of the second world war? What men or material had Abu Bakr when he had to open war simultaneously on Persia and Byzantium?

Our author repeats several times that his is not a polemical work, and that it is purely an objective study in which he would leave facts to speak for themselves. For instance, renewing this claim on page 20, the very next phrase that we read is: "legend has been active in the Arabic biographies and tradition". He cites Ibn Khaldun for attacking some people, yet how strangely it applies to himself: ". . . false statements; we must examine the causes that produce them. They are: (a) attachment to certain opinions . . . if he is pervaded by attachment to any particular opinion or sect, he immediately accepts any tradition which supports it; and this tendency and attachment cloud his judgement so that he is unable to criticize and scrutinize what he hears . . ." Or again (page 153): "Nothing can be more misleading than a number of general statements based on imperfect and incomplete knowledge, and no living man has a thorough acquaintance with . . ." It is true that the earliest collections of the Hadith were small in volume, and that the later ones had more abundant material. Nothing is more logical. Just an example of everyday occurrence to us. An Orientalist publishes a study, thinking that he has exhausted the material. Soon reviews and friendly letters invite his attention to sources not utilized by him, and the second edition of the same study becomes more voluminous. Again, somebody else investigates the same subject, and his study takes even greater proportions. The same thing has occurred to the Traditionists. In the beginning one or two got the idea of recording their memoirs. Their readers at once found that they too had some interesting data to add. Later still, others came to collect and amalgamate such different memoirs.

Page 21. Tabari says that the Abyssinians had only one elephant to attack Mecca. The Qur'an, too, speaks of the "people of the elephant". To have the luxury of "several" elephants was neither necessary nor even practical. It is easy to dispose of the "swarms of birds, throwing small stones" as a legend, but when we recall that the passage of the Qur'an in question referred to the incident only forty years after its occurrence, that many eye-witnesses were still alive, and in the camp of the deadly enemies of the Prophet, was it not easy for them to ridicule the Prophet on this score if it had not occurred? No such thing is recorded.

Page 23. Not all apostates rebelled in the time of Abu Bakr. Musailimah and Aswad al-'Ansi took a fancy to it in the life-time of the Prophet himself, who had the pleasure of hearing even the end of the last-named impostor.

Page 27. 'Uthman had married both Umm Kulthum and Ruqayya, daughters of the Prophet, one after the other.

Page 30. There is no proof to maintain that the Prophet went "often" to Syria. On page 31, line 14, there is an insinuation, if not a statement, that the Prophet, before Islam, was a polytheist. There is no proof of that.

Page 32. To say that "the majority of Muhammad's early converts were slaves" does not tally with facts. Abu Bakr, 'Uthman, Talhah, Ibn 'Awf, Abu 'Ubaidah, Ibn Jahsh and a host of others among the very early Muslims were all Meccans of good families. Of course, most of them were young; yet young men and slaves are not synonyms.



Page 34. A Catholic may even in admiration call 'Umar as "St. Paul of Islam"; yet to Muslims this would become an insult, more so because they know that the said saint was responsible for the transformation of Jesus Christ's monotheistic teaching into what it is now.

Page 40. "Muhammad believed that his message was for all Arabs, and *perhaps* for all mankind". (Italics are mine). He is not yet sure; there is some difference between "should not have been" and "was not".

Page 45. In the battle of Uhud, the Prophet received a "sword-stroke". No source is cited for this statement. Ibn Hisham is, however, clear that the wound was caused by the stones pelted by the enemy.

Page 47. When the Meccans decided to raise the siege of the Ditch, the beginning of the months of the truce of God, believed in by the Meccan heathens, is not to be neglected as being the primary cause. The mere weather would not chase them out; the road to Khaibar was open to them to receive all their requirements.

Page 48. The treaty of Hudaibiyya was no doubt a masterpiece of diplomacy; yet to affirm that it "removed the obstacles which prevented the bedouin from joining the Muslims" has no logical connection.

Page 49. To say the Jews of Khaibar to have been "outnumbered and caught off their guard" by the Muslims is baseless. Muslim soldiers numbered fifteen hundred. Abu Yoosuf and Ya'qoobi say that there were twenty thousand combatants (*muqatil*) in Khaibar. As to being off one's guard, the war continued not for some hours, but for several weeks. Before the arrival of the Muslim army, the Ghatafanites had gone to Khaibar for the aid of their Jewish allies, as recorded by several classical authors. The 'Umrat al-Qada visit of Mecca by the Prophet did not occur in the year following that of the war of Khaibar (as on page 50), but in the same year (7 A.H.) since the truce of Hudaibiyya was concluded in the year (6 A.H.). On the same page, it is asserted that Khalid embraced Islam in Mecca during the same pilgrimage. Our sources concur that it occurred in Medina, after the said pilgrimage.

Page 51. In Mecca, "Muhammad entered as a conqueror". The ordinary reader would be misled by the term "conqueror". There was practically no bloodshed, no vengeance, no plunder, but an amnesty and real winning of the hearts, so much so that the Prophet appointed a new convert from among the Meccans (and formerly one of the inveterate enemies of Islam) to be governor of the city, and himself retired without leaving a single Medinan soldier to garrison the newly-"conquered" city.

Page 56. If an amanuensis of the Prophet boasted, after apostasy, that he sometimes altered what the Prophet dictated, it cannot prove that in the present Qur'an there are inaccuracies. Those who learnt directly and orally from the Prophet had the possibility to check such mistakes.

Page 58. It sounds rather wishful to say that the history of the texts of the Bible and the Qur'an is similar. Thank God, there were no destructions of the copies of the Qur'an in their totality at any epoch as has occurred at least twice for the Bible; and there is no comparison between the readers of the Bible and the *hafizs* of the Qur'an. Further, in the Bible there are references to books which are no more extant, etc.

Page 59. No Muslim author has ever said that "a large number" of the verses in the Qur'an are those which are abrogated. Again the meaning of "*mansookh*", in the mind of those who affirm it, is not always "abrogation".

Page 60. Professor Guillaume says that according to Islam "major sins" are not pardonable. The Qur'an

(4:48, 4:116), however, clearly says: "God forgives everything except polytheism". Again (39:53) "Don't despair of the mercy of God; verily God will forgive all sins". Of course, repentance is the pre-requisite. To believe in the scape-goats for the sinners is not Islamic. It is not clear what he means (page 63) by "Islam . . . , *contrary to analogy*, means submission or resignation to God". Should it mean "sword and oppression"?

Page 66. "The Qur'an appears to require only three prayers a day, but tradition insists upon five." This is not true. In a number of verses (7:204, 17:80-81, 24:36, 24:57, 33:42, 48:9, some of which are Medinan) only two prayers, morning and evening, or morning and night, are mentioned. In some other verses (2:328, 50:39-40, 52:48-49, 76:25-26) three prayers are commanded. In 20:130 (a Meccan chapter) five could easily be discerned. For, this verse says: "Support what (ill) they say, and celebrate the praise of thy Lord before the sunrise, and before the sunset, and celebrate (also) during the hours of the night, and on the *extremities* of the day; haply thou findest (it) agreeable. "The plural "extremities" (*atraf*) must mean at least two. Whatever its exact interpretation, I take it to mean soon after midday and sunset, since "before sunrise" is already there, and only two other eventful times are midday and sunset. Thus we have clearly five prayers here. Why this divergence in the different verses of the Qur'an is a matter of personal opinions. To the reviewer, for instance, this implies that two, three, or five times of prayers every day depend on the convenience of an "honest believer". Sometimes it is really not possible to find time or place to pray during the day, outside of our home; sometimes we can return home even at midday for a brief pause from work. The real idea is to remember God as many times and as much as is humanly possible. Perhaps the colder zones, nearer the two poles, have also something to do, where the marking of the five times of the services by the movement of the sun is not always possible. Others will perhaps be able to suggest better and more plausible explanations. The author asks (on page 73): "how could a Muslim keep the fast of Ramadan from sunrise to sunset in the Arctic Circle?" This is another detail of the same problem. To reply: first of all, the fast does not commence with sunrise, but with the dawn. As to the duration, the 'ulema are now practically unanimous in dividing the world in the "normal and tolerably normal zone". By this they mean the equatorial regions and those lying between the equator and the 45th north and south parallels. This means the better half, the more populated is supportable by an average man, and the "abnormal zone", going up to the two poles. In the first category, one follows the movement of the sun for both prayer and fasting; in the other, the time-piece is the guide for calculation.

Page 67. In a congregational service, only the *Imam*, not other worshippers, faces the *Mihrab*; if everyone faced the *Mihrab*, the congregations will form a triangle. The worshippers arrange themselves in parallel ranks and files. Our author has missed the significance of the last act of the service, the *tashahhud*, the Presence, i.e., the communion with the Almighty. The Catholics call it Communion; Muslims call it *mi'raj* or highest possible ascension. In the words of the Prophet, the ordinary prayer-service is the *mi'raj* of every believer, even as the ordinary prayer-service is the *mi'raj* of every believer, even as the *Mi'raj* with which the Prophet was once honoured. Now, in this final act of *tashahhud*, the ascension of the Prophet is invoked. When the believer has humiliated himself before His Creator and Lord, and is spiritually prepared to be received in the presence of God, there is a dialogue between man and God, as follows:



*Prophet*: The most blessed greetings, the best inclinations to God!

*God*: Peace with thee, O Prophet! and the mercy and the blessings of God!

*Prophet*: Peace with us and with the pious servants of God!

This dialogue or exchange of greetings between the Prophet and God, exchanged at the moment of the Prophet's *Miraj* is now invoked to mark the communion of the humbler believers, even as the Catholics have their own symbolic invocations.

On page 68, the congregational prayer is not reserved for only "large gatherings", as Professor Guillaume believes, but from two onwards there is an Imam. Whether or not (page 69) "European dress is utterly unfitted to oriental practice" of the Islamic prayer, the learned Professor ought to go to Turkey, if not to London, Paris and Berlin mosques, to convince him that faith does not reside in any particular dress. The European dress is no violation of the *shari'ah* (as he asserts on page 155, the Prophet himself having sometimes put on Byzantine coats (*jubbah roomiyyah*)). Nor have Muslims abandoned today the Hajj (page 155), it having always been the duty of only those who have material means to go to Mecca.

Zakat is no "almsgiving" (page 69). It is a state tax on surplus property, on agricultural lands, herds of domesticated animals, commerce, mines and so on, with fixed rates and collected with all the armed might of the state. (For details see the Dr. M. Hamidullah "Bugeting and Taxation in the Time of the Holy Prophet", in *Journal of Pakistan Historical Society*, Karachi, for January 1955). On the same page he is right in chiding Muslims for the number of the beggars on the doors of their mosques. These are of course the poor, seeking charity. Similar is the reaction of Orientals towards the well-to-do paid employees seeking tips in the West!

As has been cited in a book review in "*The Islamic Review*" for October 1949, Christian missionaries have now decided "to evolve Muslims from inside", a more dangerous tactic than frontal attack. I recalled this when reading page 72, where in a most solicitous way it is suggested: "a most important matter which the Muslim community will have to deal with sooner or later, namely, how much of the Qur'an is binding on Muslims for all time and how much was intended to apply to the prophet's age and the circumstances in which he lived". The reply to this query of the author is also given by the Qur'an (2:114). Unbinding portions of the Qur'an must, of course, be all those which do not tally with the conception or interest of the non-Muslims!

In alleging the existence of some "repellent content of the Qur'an" (page 74), one wonders if the author is not thinking of the book of Ezekiel and others generally expurgated from the Bible before giving to women!

It is curious to read that the election of 'Uthman as caliph "spelt the ruin of the hopes of the Medinans" (page 81). Why did it not spell the ruin of their hopes in the case of Abu Bakr and 'Umar and 'Ali? It is not true (page 82), that 'Ali rejected the award of the arbitration. He was bound by an award to be agreed upon by both the arbitrators. There was no award, for the arbitrators disagreed when pronouncing their award.

The Baghdad life of the time of Haroon al-Rashid (page 84) has been taken to be the one depicted in the *Arabian Nights*, which was compiled later under the rival Egyptian dynasty of the Fatimids; Reynolds' *Mysteries of the Court of London* is, however, a contemporary record, by a native

of the country. Why one should be wrong and the other tolerably real?

In the chapter on the Islamic Empire (page 85 ff.) there is no mention of the sub-Himalayan continent, with its Great Moguls, etc., as big as Europe itself, where the numbers of Muslims and their intellectual and other Islamic activity has nothing to be ashamed of.

Pages 88, 98, 101 and 189. There is a curious confusion in the mind of the author, who supposes that every word in the Qur'an and the Hadith is equally obligatory — whence the expression "stranglehold of Hadith", "all development impossible" — in spite of the fact that he himself has perfectly remarked that these commands are divided into five categories: obligatory, prohibited, recommended, disapproved and indifferent; and as a matter of fact, commands of the Qur'an and the Hadith falling in the first two categories could be counted on fingers; in the third and fourth there is already enough discretion on account of the exigencies of time and clime, and even then their number is very limited; not to speak of the unlimited liberty regarding the fifth category comprising the most numerous matters.

The author has no kind words for the Hadith, nor confidence in its historic authenticity. To avoid unnecessary digression, the readers will be well advised to read Dr. Hamidullah's articles in the Arabic journal, *RAAD*, Damascus, 1953, and also its revised and enlarged Urdu translation, Hyderabad-Deccan, India, 1955. For a gist, see also *The Islamic Review* for May 1949. The Hadith has, in fact, been recorded with greater care than either the Old or the New Testament. We possess works compiled in the first century of Hijra, by the Companions of the Prophet themselves. It is logical, and even most welcome, that the earlier Traditionists took greater interest in the *riwayah*, and have left *dirayah* to the posterity of every age. Reverse the order, and there will be no reasonable ground for placing confidence in the narrations. The reaction of two minds differs regarding the same report; it is always better to have the report, as it is, faithfully preserved; and that has been the case with the Hadith.

How unjust is the remark of our author (page 97) that Shafi'i cut the *shari'ah* from its historic past! Shafi'i was not defending a pagan Arab law, but the Islamic law. Traditionists and jurists had to join hands in order to "Islamize" the customs of the Muslims in the light of the Qur'an and the Hadith. This was not the work to be accomplished overnight by the Prophet, who showed the way and gave general indications.

Is there a misprint in the assertion (page 104) that the Prophet "enjoyed" (enjoined?) *mut'ah*? He had permitted it at one occasion (to Muslim soldiers of an expedition), but I do not know of any report, even Shi'ite, saying that the Prophet himself had practised it.

There is no sense (page 110) in liking the *Masjid Asqa* of the Qur'an with the expedition of Ja'irranah (Ji'ranah). For modern Islam, the author has curiously confined his study mostly to India. After Syed Ahmad Khan, Ameer 'Ali and Iqbal, the name of Mr. Shaykh Muhammad Ashraf, editor of *The Islamic Literature*, of Lahore, represents rather the application of "from the sublime to the ridiculous".

At the end of the book, there is small comparison of Christian and Islamic faiths or essential dogmas. It is rather a primitive idea to say that God is our Father, and that we human beings are, as it were, His sons. To take the term (page 193) "in the metaphorical sense that God is the Father of all men, who stand to him (Him?) in the relation of children" would be true, if there was not the dogma that



Jesus Christ was "the only Son of God". Equally shocking to Muslims is the idea that this innocent "Son" of God should have descended into hell; or the prayer "pardon us our sins even as we pardon others" — what comparison between man and God! The Muslims cannot accept that God is to follow our example.

**SAHIFAH HAMMAM IBN MUNABBIH.** Edited by Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah, M.A., LL.B., Ph.D.(Bonn), D.Litt.(Paris). Published by the Arabic Academy of Damascus, Syria, 1953. 64 pages, with one plate of the facsimile reproduction of the MS. And also the original text with an Urdu translation and an explanatory Introduction, published by Islamic Publications Society, Hyderabad-Deccan, India, 1955. 146+xxi pages.

It is very unusual for publishers to bestow on the Islamic world works of the companions of the Prophet, dating from the first century of the Hijrah. Here is one, the first of its kind, a selection of the Hadiths by Abu Hurairah, made for the benefit of his pupil and Yemanite compatriot, Hammam Ibn Munabbih, who died in 101 or 102 A.H.—718 or 719 C.E. It is based on two MSS., one from Damascus and the other from Berlin; and it is preceded by an exhaustive introduction on the history of the writing down of the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad.

It is interesting to recall that scepticism had led the Hungarian Orientalist Professor Ignaz Goldziher<sup>1</sup> to propound the theory that the Hadiths, found in the compilations of the second and third century of the Hijrah, attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, did not really originate from the Prophet, but represented the folklore of the time of the compilation, if not really a forgery of the compilers. The reason, he opined, was that the intermediary links were lacking. He would have us believe that the preservation of authentic data only in memories of men and transmitted orally for three centuries must inevitably have brought many changes in the text.

Ignaz Goldziher was, if I may say the word, a *mujtahid*<sup>2</sup> in his field. He had discovered something ingenious, something new. Later came blind imitators, the Western *muqallids*,<sup>3</sup> who halted where the master had led, and would not budge an inch farther. For instance, Professor Guillaume, Professor Schacht, Professor Harold Gibb and many other learned men would have made the world believe that it was a fact, and not merely a random conjecture, on the part of Professor Goldziher.

Now we have a positive reply to the *mujtahid* Goldziher and to all his *muqallids*. As we learn from the introduction of the work under review, there are numerous cases of the writing down of the Hadith by the *Sahabah* (Companions of the Prophet Muhammad) in the very lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad; there are even cases where these Companions used to read to the Prophet what they had compiled, and get it corrected. As to Abu Hurairah, it is recorded that he had a large number of books (*kutub kathirah*) of his own compilation on what he had heard or seen the Prophet saying or doing.

When his young compatriot, the Yemanite Hamman, of Persian origin, came to study under the respected and elderly Abu Hurairah, the latter selected for him 130 Hadiths on morality and general culture. Hamman was proud of it, and named this collection *Sahifah Sadiqah* (the Book of Truth), and later transmitted it to his own pupils. It has come down to us *in toto*. In fact, it is breathtaking to see that the text

of the work, preserved by such diverse authors as Ibn Hanbal, Ibn Mindah and Ibn Jumu'ah — partly preserved even by Bukhari and others — is so identical that in itself it is a refutation to the allegation that the transmission from generation to generation inevitably changes the contents. It may be so in countries and civilizations where only written or oral transmissions are in vogue, not in those — as is the case with the Hadith from very early days until now — where a text is always based simultaneously on both: one gets a written copy, and reads it to the individual who had heard that very work from the original author or his immediate pupil or pupil of pupils, and corrected his own copy. When a careful word-for-word collation is made with an authenticated text, it is humanly permissible to believe that there are no changes or differences.

The text published is based on a MS. in which such well-known authors as Ibn 'Asakir (the author of the history of Damascus), al-Birzaliy of Seville and Muhammad al-Mas'udiy (the *Muhaddith*), among others, have added their attestations of reading-collating.

The Academy of Damascus and the Islamic Publications Society, Hyderabad-Deccan, India, have done a great service of learning, and clearing up misunderstanding caused by the Western *muqallids*. One wishes that an English version of this unique monograph could also be made available.

- 1 *Muhammedanische Studien*, Halle, 1888-90.
- 2 An Arabic word signifying a scholar who has the distinction of deducing conclusions from given data.
- 3 A term used in Islamic lore to designate the followers of the school of law of Imam Abu Hanifa. By transition it has come to mean "those who follow blindly".

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